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143

PART X.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

IN THE

ASIATIC PROVINCES OF TURKEY.

1886.

143

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
1	Sir W. White ..	4	Jan. 5, 1886	Petition of Armenian Society at Varna. Returns, and refers to No. 543 of 1885 ..	1
2	„ „ ..	24	15,	Roads of the Angora Vilayet. Forwards Report by Vice-Consul Barnham ..	3
3	Consul Longworth ..	1	Feb. 22,	Recall of Aziz Pasha, and appointment of Assim Pasha as Vali of Trebizond. Forwards copy of despatch to Sir W. White ..	6
4	Sir E. Thornton ..	107	Mar. 4,	Appointment of Akif Pasha as Governor of Van. Despatch from Mr. Lamb respecting	7
5	„ „ ..	147	24,	Lawlessness prevalent in Vilayet of Diarbekir. Despatch from Vice-Consul Boyajian	8
6	To Sir E. Thornton ..	142	Apr. 21,	Alleged disturbed state of Kurdistan. Rustem repudiates right of M. Hagopian to speak for Armenian community, and says province is tranquil	10
7	Sir E. Thornton ..	212	27,	Disturbances during taking of census in the Hauran. Report by Consul Dickson ..	10
8	„ „ ..	230	May 10,	Tranquillity in Syria, but bribery prevalent among officials. Report by Consul-General Eldridge	11
9	„ „ ..	234	10,	Difficulty in the Hauran. Consul Dickson reports that it has apparently been settled (see No. 7)	12
10	Consul Jago ..	4	Apr. 27,	Suppression of Bedouin disturbances at Yambo. Despatch from Consul Jago reporting	13
11	„ „ ..	5	May 17,	Fanatical outbreak between Mecca and Jeddah. Copy of despatch to Sir E. Thornton.	14
12	Sir E. Thornton ..	308	June 14,	Breach of faith by imprisonment of Druse Chiefs with promises of safe return, and ill-treatment by mob of Greek Catholic Patriarch. Report from Consul at Damascus ..	14
13	To Sir E. Thornton ..	218	July 6,	Measures of reform in Asiatic provinces of Turkey. Take opportunity for making representations to Sultan respecting ..	16
14	Consul-General Abbott	23	June 26,	State of Van. Report by Dr. Cochran ..	17
15	Sir E. Thornton ..	344	July 5,	Locusts in district of Mardin. Report by Acting Consul Devey	18
16	„ „ ..	347 Confidential	7,	Laz Chieftain Ali Pasha. Despatch from Consul Longworth respecting	19
17	„ „ ..	371	26,	Disturbances at Van at election of Armenian National Council. Despatch from Vice-Consul Barnham	20
18	„ „ ..	381	31,	Armenian riot at Van. Further despatch from Vice-Consul Barnham	22
19	„ „ ..	397 Confidential	Aug. 10,	Attack by Kurds on Russian Yezidis, and assembly of Kurds on frontier. Porte invited to repress disorders	22
20	„ „ ..	390	10,	Departure of pilgrims for Mecca, and treatment by Vali of foreign-protected subjects. Report by Consul at Damascus	23
21	To Sir E. Thornton ..	211 Telegraphic	28,	Reforms in Armenia. Have you presented note to Porte respecting?	23
22	Sir E. Thornton ..	157 Telegraphic	29,	Reforms in Armenia. Memorandum containing substance of No. 13 delivered to Porte. Its reception (see above)	24
23	„ „ ..	448	29,	Extends above	24
24	To Sir E. Thornton ..	212 Telegraphic	29,	Reforms in Armenia. Was note delivered on discretion allowed by Lord Rosebery? (see No. 22)	24
25	Sir E. Thornton ..	158 Telegraphic	30,	Reforms in Armenia. Memorandum delivered under discretionary power given by Lord Rosebery (see above)	24
26	„ „ ..	449	30,	Extends above	24
27	To Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Vienna and Rome	..	30,	Reforms in Armenia. Explanations as to Memorandum delivered to Porte ..	25

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
28	To Sir E. Malet ..	426	Aug. 30, 1886	Note to Porte respecting Armenia. Inquiries made by Count Hatzfeldt, and explanation given to him..	25
29	To Sir E. Thornton ..	270 B	30,	Note to Porte respecting Armenia. Conversation with Rustem Pasha	25
30	Sir E. Thornton ..	409	17,	Continued detention of Druse Chiefs in prison. Despatch from Consul Dickson (see No. 12)	26
31	„ „ ..	428	24,	Reforms in Armenia. Memorandum delivered to Saïd Pasha. Remarks of his Excellency, on its reception	26
32	„ „ ..	439	27,	Reforms in Armenia. Conversation with Grand Vizier and Saïd Pasha	27
33	Mr. Fane	462	Sept. 7,	Plundering by Kurds on Russo-Turkish frontier. Despatch from Acting Consul Devey respecting	28
34	„ „	475	14,	Dismissal of Ali Effendi. Despatch from Acting Consul Devey respecting.. ..	30
35	„ „	477	15,	Condition of affairs in Armenia. Letter from American missionary at Van respecting ..	30
36	„ „	484	16,	Property looted by Kurds. Mr. Devey reports that it has been restored by Turkish authorities (see No. 33)	31
37	Sir E. Thornton ..	500	Oct. 5,	Disturbances at Van. Armenians implicated released (see No. 17)	32
38	Mr. Nicolson ..	113	Sept. 22,	Kurds migrated from Turkish territory. Induced to return across the frontier ..	32
39	Sir W. White ..	529	Oct. 26,	Oppression of Armenians by Kurds, and newspaper article on Armenian question. Despatches from Vice-Consul Barnham ..	32
40	„ „ ..	530	26,	Affairs in Vilayet of Trebizond. Despatch from Consul Longworth respecting ..	36
41	„ „ ..	554	Nov. 8,	Inquiry by Saïb Bey at Aleppo. Despatch from Consul Henderson. Note addressed to Porte respecting grievances of British subjects at Aleppo	37
42	„ „ ..	556 Confidential	9,	Disorder in Province of Van. Conduct of police. Hostility of Mussulmans to Armenian Christians. Report by Vice-Consul Barnham	40
43	To Sir W. White ..	360	22,	Complaints of British subjects at Aleppo. Approves note to Porte (see No. 41) ..	43
44	„ „ ..	361	22,	Disorder in Province of Van. Approves attention of Porte having been called to (see No. 42)..	44
45	Sir W. White ..	562 Confidential	12,	Alleged violations of the Organic Statute of the Lebanon. Report by Mr. Eyres respecting	44
46	„ „ ..	591	25,	Attempt on life of Vali of Aleppo. Telegram from Consul Henderson	47
47	To Sir W. White ..	299 Telegraphic	Dec. 14,	Removal of Djemil Pasha from Aleppo. Express satisfaction	47
48	„ „ ..	392	14,	Extends above	47
49	Sir W. White ..	622	7,	Report by Saïb Bey on misconduct of Djemil Pasha. Telegram from Consul Henderson .	47
50	„ „ ..	629	13,	Attempt on life of Djemil Pasha. Report on circumstances by Consul Henderson (see No. 46)	48
51	„ „ ..	631 Confidential	13,	Misconduct of Djemil Pasha. His influence at the Palace. Removed to the Hedjaz. Despatch from Consul Henderson ..	49
52	To Sir W. White ..	397	21,	Commission of Inquiry at Aleppo. Approves proceedings respecting (see above) ..	51
53	Sir W. White ..	630 Confidential	13,	Bad state of Vilayet of Bitlis since return of Aarif as Governor. Report by Acting Consul Devey	51
54	„ „ ..	647	20,	Conduct of Djemil Pasha. Views of Saïb Bey, as communicated to Consul Henderson respecting	52

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Administrative Reforms in the Asiatic Provinces of Turkey.

Part X.

No. 1.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 13.)

(No. 4.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 5, 1886.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 490 of the 25th ultimo, containing a Petition addressed through Her Majesty's Representative at Sophia to Her Majesty's Government by an Armenian Society at Varna, which your Lordship was good enough to send for my information.

I have now the honour, in accordance with your instructions, to return Inclosures 2 and 3 in that despatch, and I beg to refer to my observations in my despatch No. 543 of the 26th November, 1885, on the subject of the Armenian question.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Brophy to Mr. Lascelles.

(No. 17.)

Sir, *Varna, November* 8, 1885.

INCLOSED I have the honour to forward a Circular Petition from an Armenian Society, a copy of which was handed in to all the Consulates in this town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. G. BROPHY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

Circular Petition.

Société des Patriotes Arméniens en Europe, le 27 Octobre, 1885.

Excellence,

PORTEUR du mandat des patriotes Arméniens, notre Comité prend humblement la liberté d'avoir recours à votre Excellence, pour requérir l'attention bienveillante du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine en faveur des millions de martyres qui gémissent en Arménie sous le joug du régime actuel Turc et des tribus nomades.

L'absence absolue de la justice qui dépend des caprices fanatiques d'un prêtre Musulman, aux yeux duquel tout Chrétien est infidèle; les abus de pouvoir au dépens

du peuple martyre qui est traité en pur esclave devant vie, bien, et honneur aux passions des fonctionnaires; le brigandage exercé par les Kurdes nomades d'ordre et pour compte des autorités des provinces. Voici, Excellence, le caractéristique de l'état des choses en Arménie.

La population de la Cilicie qui, exaspérée de cette situation, après avoir vu échouer ses tentatives de 1855-1860, avait voulu retenter la fortune des armes en 1878 pour sa liberté et qui a été trahie par Ahmed Pacha Kozanli, gémit encore en ce moment sous les chaînes dans les prisons de Marach.

La même scène se répète à Erzeroum, depuis la trahison du mouvement de 1882 et Van, Mouch, et Diarbékir sont de vrais théâtres d'atrocités inouïes dont l'idée seule ferait frémir les nobles peuples de l'Europe.

En cet état des choses, Excellence, le peuple dépérit à vue d'œil; personnellement et économiquement un plan d'extermination est cruellement poursuivi et par un système latent, depuis la création de l'Article LXI du Traité de Berlin, tous les efforts du Gouvernement Ture sont portés à exterminer la race Arménienne dans sa patrie. Ceux qui ont le malheur de s'attirer l'attention des autorités Turques, ou par leur intelligence ou par leur position sociale, ne peuvent échapper à la poursuite qu'en s'expatriant; ainsi, des milliers de pères de familles dont sont recrutés journellement les rangs des patriotes à l'étranger que nous avons l'honneur de représenter, se trouvent-ils en ce moment déportés du sein de leurs familles et errant par le monde à la recherche d'un moyen de rentrer à leurs foyers chéris, et auprès de leurs malheureux enfants.

Ils soupirent à l'étranger pour leurs familles, tandis que leurs pères, leurs mères, leurs enfants dépérissent de misère et de privation en patrie.

C'est pour un peuple réduit à ces conditions de vie, si vie peut être appelée une existence de cette sorte, Excellence, que nous osons aujourd'hui requérir la bienveillante attention du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine.

Ce n'est ni l'ambition de posséder un royaume, ni le désir d'avoir une indépendance politique qui nous poussent à faire cette démarche; c'est simplement une vie supportable, des conditions d'existence plus humaine, que nous requérons.

Nous voulons pouvoir rentrer en notre patrie, pouvoir y vivre et travailler paisiblement les terres saintes que nos ancêtres nous ont léguées par leur sang.

Nous espérons, Excellence, que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine très magnanime d'Angleterre qui, au Congrès de Berlin, a sanctionné par sa signature l'impérieuse nécessité des réformes dans le régime gouvernemental en Arménie, daignera bien accorder un accueil bienveillant à ces humbles recours des patriotes Arméniens que nous osons soumettre à votre Excellence.

La nation Arménienne mérite bien un sort meilleur, Excellence; la probité, la loyauté, dans ses classes les plus arriérées même, est le caractéristique de l'Arménien. En Orient, où l'esclavage, l'oppression, a démoralisé la plupart des peuples, l'Arménien conserve encore ces vertus sociales de haute valeur; un simple ouvrier vivant au jour à quelques sous, est souvent le gardien des richesses des négociants Européens en Turquie. L'Arménien est laborieux, malgré les persécutions qu'il endure, il consacre ses sueurs à la culture de ses terres, tout sûr qu'il soit que le fonctionnaire Turc, le brigand Kurde ne lui en laisseront pas jouir le fruit. Les voyageurs Européens mêmes témoignent qu'en Arménie, la proximité d'un village Arménien est connu par la culture des environs, tandis que ses voisins le Turc et le Kurde vivent dans l'oisiveté, convaincus d'avoir en son temps leurs parts abondantes dans le fruit du travail de l'Arménien, grâce à l'appui de l'autorité.

Nous ne voulons pas nous étendre, Excellence, dans le récit de toutes les qualités qui caractérisent l'Arménien en commerce, en industrie, en sciences, et dans les arts; ces titres de l'Arménien vous sont connus, et ses droits à une existence nationale sont consacrés par une patrie, sur le sol de laquelle ses ancêtres ont versé leur sang et l'ont travaillée et civilisée de leurs propres bras. Une littérature riche douée de propres caractères nationaux, et enfin une Église conservée dans ses formes les plus primitives distinguent le peuple Arménien de tous les autres et en forment une nation.

L'Arménien est digne, Excellence, de la sympathie et de l'attention des Puissances de l'Europe; il est appelé à remplir le rôle d'étape à la civilisation Européenne dans les développements de celle-ci en Asie; dans les temps les plus reculés de l'histoire, il a joué le rôle de barrière contre l'invasion des barbares, contre les Tartares et les Persans; par les temps modernes, il est le seul élément en Asie qui puisse garantir les vrais intérêts de la civilisation.

C'est pour cette nation, Excellence, que nous osons aujourd'hui de recourir à votre vaillant intermédiaire pour requérir l'attention du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté

Britannique en faveur des malheureux martyres de l'Arménie; ne fut-ce que pour faire respecter la signature que vous avez apposée au Traité de Berlin, nous croyons que la cause de ce malheureux peuple soit digne de l'attention du Gouvernement que vous représentez si dignement.

Le peuple Arménien est dispersé dans tous les sens de la Turquie et vous voyez, Excellence, que l'Article LXI du Traité de Berlin impliquant toutes les provinces de l'Asie Turque habitées par les Arméniens, à cause des difficultés qu'il présente dans l'application à toutes les provinces à la fois, fournit des prétextes infinis au Gouvernement Ottoman pour le laisser lettre morte. Mais Sivas, Trébizonde, Erzeroum, Van, Diarbékir, et la Cilicie, où les Arméniens forment encore une majorité compacte en nombre et ont un ascendant incontestable sur les populations Turques et Kurdes, par leur instruction et intelligence, pourraient se constituer en provinces unies autonomes sous la suzeraineté de la Sublime Porte et le sceptre d'un Prince Européen. Une occupation militaire de bien peu de durée pourrait établir l'ordre et la tranquillité dans le pays, sous un régime réformé tel que celui de la Roumélie-Orientale, et ouvrirait immédiatement les ressources des richesses naturelles du pays à la civilisation, sous la pression de l'esprit de commerce et d'industrie qui est une des qualités de l'Arménien et qui lui fait tant chercher les relations des nations Européennes.

En adressant cette humble requête nous n'avons pas la prétention, Excellence, de vous éclairer sur des choses qui, nous ne doutons point, vous sont connues, mais mandataires des pères expatriés qui soupirent pour leurs enfants, des fils de famille qui ont dû abandonner leur père et mère et sœurs, non pas pour échapper aux tortures, mais pour pouvoir assurer à leur malheureux parents un morceau de pain, en se sauvant la vie, nous ne saurions supprimer cet exposé de l'état des Arméniens qui, en dépit de toutes leurs vertus sociales, en dépit des promesses des Puissances et du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, gémissent encore dans la situation que vous leur connaissez.

Et dans l'espoir, Excellence, que grâce à votre bienveillant intermédiaire le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique voudra bien exaucer nos prières et sauver du malheur et du dépérissement tant d'êtres humains, nous avons l'honneur, &c.

Le Comité pour la Défense des Droits de la Patrie.

A Son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères
de Sa Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre,
&c., &c., &c.,
Londres.

No. 2.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 20.)

(No. 24.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 15, 1886.

I HAVE the honour to inclose an interesting Report by Mr. Vice-Consul Barnham on the subject of the roads of the Angora Vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Angora, January* 9, 1886.

YOUR Excellency is aware that during the last three years the Governor-General of each vilayet has been more or less occupied with the construction of highways throughout Asia Minor intended to offer easy communication between the principal towns and the sea-coast. In the Vilayet of Angora very extensive road works have been carried on during the three seasons, second only in extent to those conducted by Rifaat Pasha in the neighbouring Province of Sivas, and, by general consent of those who have compared the two, superior in detail of construction. I beg, therefore, to submit, for the favour of your perusal, certain information as to the length of the roads, the system of construction, the time and amount of labour employed, and the extent to which the roads have already been opened for traffic.

The new roads within the Vilayet of Angora may, for the purposes of this Report, be described under the following three sections:—

1. The west-north-western route, which is intended to communicate with the port of Ismidt.
2. The east-north-eastern route, which communicates with the port of Samsoun.
3. The south-eastern route, which communicates with the port of Mersine.

The first section has an entire length of 167 kilom., and terminates at the western boundary of the province, two hours beyond the town of Nally Khan.

The elevation of the road throughout this section varies as follows: Nally Khan, 486 metres (1,594 feet); Chayir Khan, 348 metres (1,142 feet); Beybazar, 609 metres (1,998 feet); Ayash, 608 metres (1,994 feet); and Angora, 860 metres, or 2,812 feet, above sea-level. The greatest difficulties of construction have been encountered in this section. The Ayash Mountain, for instance, 23 miles from Angora, has an elevation of 1,287 metres, or 4,224 feet, but entailed the construction of 6,700 metres of roadway on the east side, and 10,000 metres on the west side.

The eastern route proceeds from Angora to Yuzgat, and measures 229 kilom. At a distance of 98 kilom. from Angora it crosses the Kizil Irmak (Halys), which is here spanned by the Chesné Keupru Bridge, an old stone structure in want of repair. The route is continued to the Delija Irmak, a small but treacherous stream, tributary to the Kizil Irmak, also spanned by an ancient stone bridge, called the Sirkelu Keupru. Up to this point the elevation of Angora is maintained with no material variation, but here the road commences to ascend, and passing over the Ayghir Dagh Mountain, reaches Yuzgat at an elevation of 1,300 metres, or 4,266 feet.

The north-eastern route passes from Yuzgat through Chorum (620 metres, or 2,034 feet) to the boundary of the vilayet, about four hours beyond that town, where it is continued by the Samsoun high road to the port of Samsoun. It has an entire length within the province of 116 kilom.

The south-eastern route has a total length of 380 kilom. within the Vilayet of Angora, and about 100 kilom. within that of Adana. It proceeds from Angora in a south-eastern direction, crossing the Kizil Irmak at Keupri Keuy, 80 kilom. from Angora, and passing through Kursheir, 174 kilom. to Kaiserich (294 kilom.), where the route proceeds southward through the Province of Adana to Mersine. The elevation of the road varies within the province as follows: Keupru Keuy (Kizil Irmak), 875 metres (2,871 feet); Kursheir, 878 metres (2,881 feet); and Kaiserich, 1,080 kilom. (3,544 feet). Near Kaiserich the road passes Mount Argæus (13,800 feet).

The two first routes may be said to be completed; the south-eastern route is not complete between Kursheir and Kaiserich, but will be finished early in the coming season.

In addition to the routes already described, minor routes are in course of construction from Yuzgat to Kaiserich (length 103 kilom.), from Yuzgat to the eastern boundary of the vilayet (length 115 kilom.), and from Kaiserich to Sivas with a length within the vilayet of 35 kilom.

I annex an outline Map of the Vilayet of Angora, the various routes being marked in red.

Every Turkish subject is required by law to labour on the public roads four days in every year; but if the construction of any part of the roads presents special difficulties, or if its completion be required to be expedited for certain reasons, the Governor-General may sanction the employment of the same labourers for longer terms, always providing that, on the completion of the work specified, the labourer shall be furnished by the Road Superintendent with a receipt for the same. Those who do not labour on the roads pay a tax of 1 medjidié per head, which is collected by the Chief of each village or parish ("Mukhtar"), and is intended to defray the necessary expenses. The construction of the road is intrusted to a Chief Engineer residing at Angora, assisted by an Engineer for each sandjak or department. Three of the Engineers in this department are Europeans. The Chief Engineer receives 2,500 piastres per month, the others 1,750 piastres (first class), and 1,500 piastres (second class). In several vilayets natives have been appointed to the post of Engineer with very slight fitness for the post, and without any certificate of qualification. The Engineer of the Sandjak of Kaiserich, Hamdi Bey, belongs to this category. Two years ago he was a paid foreman on the Sivas roads.

Immediately under the control of the Engineers are the Road Superintendents or Conductors, who are required to travel constantly over the district to which they are appointed, directing the operations in accordance with the instructions of the Engineers (500 piastres per month).

Each group of labourers is directed by a paid foreman ("Ish bashi"), receiving 250 piastres per month. In addition to the above, a Storekeeper ("Ambar Emini") is stationed at Angora, receiving 250 piastres per month, and during the progress of the work, Storekeepers, paid at the same rate, are appointed to reside at the town nearest to the scene of operations.

The detail of road-making is subject to instructions issued by the Ministry of Public Works. The roads must have a uniform breadth of 5 metres for the passage of carriages, flanked on each side by 1½ metres of bridle-path. A trench 1½ metres wide, and the same in depth, carries off the flood waters on each side. The foundations of the road are made of the hardest stone available, broken into wedge-shaped pieces which dovetail, and are packed perpendicularly one against the other to a depth of 25 centim.

This is capped by a stratum of macadam, and the whole covered in with shale and sand. The loose, friable character of the soil in many places, and the frequent necessity of carrying the road across the bed of a mountain torrent, have rendered necessary the construction of numerous bridges. Thus, between Angora and the western boundary-line, there are thirty-five vaulted stone bridges, and forty-one bridges of mixed construction, having stone buttresses and a planked pavement. Between Yuzgat and Chorum there are as many as 255 stone bridges and 160 of mixed construction.

It is evident that, although small (averaging not more than 50 metres in length), the construction of these bridges must entail a great deal of labour and difficulty. The widest bridges on these roads are that over the Kirmir Chai, a small river three hours on this side of Beybazar (144 metres), a bridge of mixed construction; that over the Kizil Irmak, called Chesné Keupru (110 metres), between Angora and Yuzgat, a stone construction; and the Sirkelu Keupru bridge over the Delija Irmak River (100 metres), also of stone. The bridge over the Kizil Irmak at Keupru Keuy, on the road to Kursheir (section 3), is a solid stone bridge of Roman construction.

The Regulations provide that, in the construction of roads over rising ground, the gradient shall not exceed 7 metres in 100; but in practice this limit is generally exceeded. Road-building commences about the beginning of the month of May, is suspended during the month of Ramazan, and during the ingathering of the harvest, and ends towards the close of October. The road works during the past season could not be carried on very actively on account of the levy of the reserves.

The system of compulsory labour weighs heavily upon the people, especially those who belong to villages remote from the high road. Early in June last I visited a village called Caimaz, in the Caza of Sivri Hissar, and found that the working hands in the village were all under orders to proceed to a point on the road between Angora and Kursheir, sixty hours distant from their village, scarcely any but boys and women remaining to tend the flocks. Moreover, those who went would travel the distance there and back on foot.

The Regulations provide that, for the purpose of keeping the new roads in proper repair, a system of cantonments shall be adopted on each road.

At intervals of two to four hours, varying according to the difficulties of the ground, the villages adjoining the road are grouped in cantons, each canton being placed under the charge of a paid Cantonnier, who must be at work on the road, summer and winter, on all days except Friday, and find the labour necessary for all repairs required within his district. If, however, the nature of the repairs required is such as to call for more working hands than he can supply, he must address himself to the Chief Cantonnier, who lives at the nearest or most suitable town on the road.

During the season of construction there have been as many as 40,000 men engaged upon the roads at one time. The work was commenced in 1882 by Hadji Akif Effendi, the Acting Vali. The western route was mainly constructed when Ismaïl Hakki Pasha was Vali of Angora; but the work was hurriedly and badly done, and his successor, Aziz Pasha, was almost entirely occupied in repairing it. The Yuzgat road was completed by the present Vali, Sirri Pasha, who also planned and carried out the execution of a good carriage-road round the town of Angora, while, at his instance, the Municipality of Angora has constructed a good macadamized road through the town. Angora being surrounded by vineyards, at half-an-hour to one hour's distance, which offer a delightful residence in summer, it is proposed to construct similar roads from the vineyards to the town. These local works have effected a great improvement in the town, and deserve to be acknowledged with gratitude by the people.

Travellers proceeding to Constantinople have the choice of two alternative roads.

They may travel on horseback by the old caravan-track to Ismidt, or by carriage to Moudania, in which case they follow a rude carriage-track which passes Sivri Hissar, Eskischeher, and Broussa, and is one day's journey longer than that from Ismidt. Merchandize imported from Constantinople invariably comes on mule-back from Ismidt. The completion of the new carriage-road as far as Ismidt would lead to the transport of many articles by carriage, while those persons who now use the carriage-road viâ Broussa would naturally prefer the Ismidt road on account of the shorter distance. This road, as we have seen, has been completed as far as the western boundary, but is at present useless, owing to the fact that the Government of Castamouni, which has the control of the road for fifteen hours west of the Angora frontier, will not carry on the work of construction.

A co-operative movement by the Governments of the two vilayets, each vilayet supplying 20,000 men, would insure its speedy completion; but there appears to be no hope of this at present. Here, many of the villagers have performed the accumulative work of two or three years, working eight or twelve days in succession, but the Government of Castamouni admits no plea of emergency, and allows its workmen to perform only the four days' labour due for the current year. There are many instances of the inconvenient and, in some cases, ridiculous manner in which the towns and villages are grouped and classified, anomalies which cause constant disputes between the different vilayets, and hinder the construction of the roads. There is, for instance, a group of nine villages situated within the Vilayet of Sivas, four hours' distance from the north-eastern frontier, which, however, are subject to Angora, and I have met with similar cases.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 3.

Consul Longworth to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received March* 16.)

(No. 1.) *Trebizond, February* 22, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Minister at Constantinople, reporting the recall of Aziz Pasha, and the appointment of Assim Pasha as Vali of Trebizond.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Consul Longworth to Sir W. White.

Trebizond, February 22, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report the recall of Aziz Pasha, and the appointment of Assim Pasha as Governor-General of the Vilayet of Trebizond.

Assim Pasha was for some time Minister for Foreign Affairs, in succession to Abédine Pasha, who last October was named Vali at Sivas on Rifaat Pasha's transfer to Smyrna.

Aziz Pasha left Samsoun for Constantinople on the 13th instant, and Assim Pasha, arriving here on the 20th, had this day the "Berat" of his appointment publicly read in the courtyard of the Government House.

His Excellency is not altogether a stranger at Trebizond, having been here for a few months, as a Vali of the good type, some ten years ago. It is feared, however, that he will not show the same zeal and energy manifested by him during his former Governorship, an impression arising from a belief that he has been named here as an exile against his own will.

The departure, on the other hand, of so popular a Governor as Aziz Pasha is deeply felt by Christians and Mussulmans alike.

The conduct of affairs by him during a little more than a year's tenure of office cannot but reflect great credit on his administrative capacities, for he had succeeded, by his tact and judgment, his sense of right and integrity of character, in greatly improving the general state of the vilayet, left in a deplorable condition by his predecessor Sirri Pasha, who, though honest and active, seems to have incited a spirit of enmity by his hot-tempered, wilful, and querulous disposition.

Aziz Pasha's short Governorship of the Trebizond Vilayet may be briefly stated to be marked by the better administration of justice, by the suppression of brigandage, by the conciliation of the Laz emigrants, and by the construction of useful roads and edifices.

My close intimacy with him enables me to describe some of his more prominent characteristics, which I dare say will be read with some interest.

Mild and amiable, impressionable and generous, Aziz Pasha was at times thought to be, by some of my colleagues, rather weak, the consequent effect, it is added, of an apoplectic fit. But I have reason to think otherwise.

On the contrary, for a Turkish functionary, I invariably found him not only companionable but enterprising, strong in conviction, consistent in action, and one who shrinks not, in a quiet and unobtrusive manner, to contradict a statement, or contest an opinion which he believes to be erroneous.

Descended from a family of Valis, he has had extensive experience in almost every part of the Ottoman Empire, and may fairly be considered as one of the best Mussulman authorities on the affairs of Turkey.

Should he be called to the Ministry, his qualities are such as will assuredly render him an earnest and useful dignitary of State who is likely to hold the welfare of his country at heart.

His antecedents are too well known at the Embassy to need my adding that his political sympathies are entirely with the English.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 4.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received March* 17.)

(No. 107.) *Constantinople, March* 4, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Van on the subject of the appointment of Akif Pasha, late President of the Council of State, to the Governorship of the Province of Van.

This appointment appears to have been viewed with satisfaction by the Armenian population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Acting Vice-Consul Lamb to Sir W. White.

(No. 2.) *Van, February* 10, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that news was received here yesterday of the appointment of Akif Pasha, late President of the Council of State, to the Governorship of this province. The news has been very generally received with satisfaction, especially by the Armenian population, amongst whom considerable suppressed irritation has for some time existed in consequence of the harassing policy adopted by the late Vali towards them. Amongst the Turks also the party supported by Hamid Pasha has recently been losing ground, so that, although he has been far from an exceptionally bad Governor, few will regret his departure. More importance than usual, however, is attached to this change on account of the high rank of the Vali-designate, and the expectations of the Armenians are raised by the idea that this may be an indication of an intention on the part of the Porte of taking in hand the long-promised reforms.

Rumours are also current of a scheme for uniting the three districts of Van, Bitlis, and Hekkiari to form one province of the first class. The disadvantages of the unnecessary multiplication of small vilayets have frequently been alluded to in Consular Reports, and the measure in question would be advisable from several points of view; but nothing seems to be known here officially on the subject, and I cannot find that the rumours rest upon any basis more solid than conjecture.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HARRY H LAMB.

No. 5.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received March* 31.)

(No. 147.) *Constantinople, March* 24, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch addressed by Mr. Thomas Boyajian, British Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, to Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, on the subject of the lawlessness now prevalent in the Vilayet of Diarbekir.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Vice-Consul Boyajian to Acting Consul Devey.

(No. 7. Confidential.) *Diarbekir, February* 5, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit, for your information, a brief sketch of the state of things in this vilayet during the year ended.

The year has closed with a marked increase of such crimes, in some parts of the province, as highway robbery, rapine, and murder, and with consequent insecurity of the roads for travellers, either singly or even in small parties.

Reports of outrages of this nature have, during the year, reached me from every direction, but more particularly from the Cazas of Silivan, Midiat, and Shurnak, where the authority of the Government is less felt and disorganization is almost complete.

Organized bands of marauders, who are habitually roaming about, descend, now and then, upon the peaceful inhabitants of the villages, and commit every sort of violence, wounding, slaughtering, plundering their effects, and carrying away sheep and cattle. These acts are generally committed at the instigation of the Chiefs.

It would make the present Report an unnecessarily long one if I were to state here all the cases which have come under my certain knowledge. I shall therefore confine myself to annexing a list of those alone of which the details have been reported to me.

The principal cause of the augmentation of lawlessness is, I may state, the incapacity of the Government officials in the cazas. An ignorant Kaïmakam with four or five gendarmes could naturally not command respect among the turbulent Kurds, nor, on account of motives of self-interest, would he lay hands on them even if he could. For those marauders, as stated above, are mostly led and sheltered by the Beys, who are all-powerful in the cazas, and it is to the interest of the Kaïmakams to cultivate their good-will; and even those few who are occasionally apprehended and delivered to the hands of justice are, for obvious reasons, set free without suffering the penalty of the law. Nor can we expect it to be otherwise as long as the Courts in the cazas are composed of such men as they are; even the Courts of this place do not inspire much confidence among the people. I was told the other day, by a person whose knowledge of their working is extensive, that since the establishment of these Courts no one of influence or means has ever been condemned, however guilty he may have been. This may appear an exaggerated statement, yet there is undoubtedly a great deal of truth in it. The fact being such, it is no wonder that the sufferers should mostly look upon the Government and judicial officials with contempt, and not like to apply for redress, but only wait for a chance to avenge themselves upon their oppressors, and thus augment lawlessness and crime.

I may also cite as a second cause the present political complication in European Turkey; the rumour that another war was imminent naturally alarmed the Kurds, and many of those belonging to the reserve forces fled to the mountains to avoid being called to arms, and finding themselves once thus situated they began to commit outrages. Besides, the Kurds, ever incapable of comprehending politics, imagine that, under such circumstances, they are no longer answerable for their misdeeds.

I must not omit to mention the prevailing poverty as another cause contributing in some degree to the present state of things. Agriculture, as long as the price of grain remains so low, is not a remunerative enterprise to small farmers, money is getting very scarce, and the poverty among this class is so universal and deep that one cannot help wondering how these miserable creatures manage to procure their means of subsistence,

however slight they may be. The natural outcome of such misery is violence, theft, robbery, &c.

In conclusion, I have only to add that there can be no insurmountable difficulty in suppressing the existing lawlessness and tranquillizing the province. The Kurds, though very bold, yet never have the courage to face the Government. Let them only know that the Government intends to deal with them with a strong hand and determination, and they will at once settle down, and the province become quiet and secure.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

Annex.

1. In December last, at Derekur (Silivan), the Kurds attacked a caravan and carried off two mules.
2. In the same month, and at the same place, a priest and two other men were robbed.
3. Five men were robbed of all their effects at Godar (Silivan).
4. Another party was robbed at the fountain of Salad (Silivan).
5. From Hashtana (Silivan) a flock of sheep was carried away.
6. A similar incident occurred at Farkin.
7. A band of Kurds attacked an Armenian village called Hoduof (Silivan), murdered the chief man, and plundered his house.
8. A Kurdish woman, in going from Farkin to a village, was seized by Kurds, maltreated, and robbed.
9. A band of Kurds assailed a village called Duk (Bahramki), killed a man, and sacked the village.
10. In October last a man on his way to Diarbekir was set upon by Kurds, and all his effects and money, about 900 piastres, were taken from him.
11. In the same month a band of robbers carried away from the village of Gré Sinan 900 head of sheep.
12. A priest, on his way to Diarbekir, was robbed, and his two mules were taken from him at four hours' distance from the town.
13. In December a certain Abdullah Hasso attacked a party, killed one man, and wounded three others.
14. In November a small party coming from Arghani was set upon by Circassians and robbed.
15. A Sheikh coming from Mecca was attacked by Circassians, his servant was murdered, and his horses, money, and goods taken from him at a place five hours from this town on the Aleppo road.
16. Another man was lately robbed by Circassians at Sheikh Khan, four hours from Mardin.
17. Near the village of Hokian (Silivan) the Kurds killed a shepherd and carried off the cattle.
18. Another man was murdered at Sheikh Dodan (Bsheri).
19. There was a fight between the Kurds near Khian, in which I am told forty-three men fell. This belongs partly to the Bitlis Vilayet.
20. In an encounter between the Kurds of Kharzan and Bodikan, which lasted twenty-four hours, thirty-four men fell; this also belongs chiefly to Bitlis.
21. In another fight between the Kurds of Khargan and Bakiran twenty-five men fell; this also belongs mostly to Bitlis.
22. Ahmed Tammo Gours, with sixty followers, attacked Kafarzo (Midiat), sacked the village, and wounded three men. This Ahmed is a notorious brigand, with 400 or 500 men under his orders. He has long been a terror to the inhabitants of the Cantons of Bsheri, Bohramki, and Shark, levying black-mail and committing outrages at his pleasure. It is estimated that he murdered or caused the death of twenty men during the year 1885. He was arrested and imprisoned towards the end of January 1886.
23. He further attacked another village, killing one man and wounding four others.
24. A certain Ibrahim, of Hassar (Midiat), raised a disturbance in a village, in which one man was murdered.
25. Also in two other villages, Salahiah and Ankof (Midiat), one man was killed and two wounded.

26. The son of Asmané Tamour, with the son of Hasané, Shamdin, of Cafarzo (Midiat), wounded a man and took from him 2,000 piastres.

27. Hadji Husain Effendi, a wealthy and influential man of this place, in conjunction with an officer of gendarmerie, collected from the neighbouring villages a large number of Kurds, made a determined attack upon the Kurds of Mazi Daghi, and butchered in cold blood thirty persons, including defenceless women. The cause of this outrage is said to be the loss of two oxen from a farm of Hadji Husain's, who suspected that the theft was committed by the Kurds above mentioned. The evidence taken on the spot by the Public Prosecutor at Mardin left no doubt of Hadji Husain's culpability, yet he was the other day formally acquitted.

Many other outrages were committed at Midiat and Shurnak during the year, but as I am not in possession of the details, I refrain from citing them.

(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 6.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir E. Thornton.

E

(No. 142.)

Foreign Office, April 21, 1886.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador called on me to-day and showed me a telegram from the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople, which had been communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by Musurus Pasha in August last. This telegram emphatically repudiated the right of M. Hagopian to speak in the name of the Armenian community. Rustem Pasha said that he thought it right to call my attention to the telegram from the Patriarch, because he had noticed appeals in the newspapers from M. Hagopian addressed to the charitable in regard to the alleged disturbed state of Kurdistan. His Excellency said that the condition of that province was perfectly tranquil and satisfactory.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 7.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 212.)

Constantinople, April 27, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting certain disturbances which have taken place on the occasion of the taking of the census of the Druze and Mussulman population of the Hauran; this step on the part of the authorities has been viewed with great jealousy, and much opposition has been shown to those charged with this duty.

The result appears to have been a collision between the Druzes and the military.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Consul Dickson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 14.)

Damascus, April 14, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, for some time past, the authorities of this vilayet have been endeavouring to take the census of the Druze and Mussulman population inhabiting the Hauran, and have, at the same time, been giving directions for the establishment of Mohammedan schools in that district, and for improving the road leading thither from Damascus. The Druzes, as well as the people of the Hauran in general, have viewed these measures with extreme jealousy, fearing that the object of the authorities in taking the census is to enforce, later on, the conscription, and they accordingly refused to comply with the orders of the Government officials to have their names and those of their families registered. This has led

to a considerable amount of ill-feeling, which has been intensified by the opposition shown by the authorities to the Druzes occupying two deserted villages, called Mismieh and Shaara, situated on the north-western limit of the Ledja, and not far from the Turkish military station of Brak. Quarrels also have arisen between the Druzes and some Circassians living near Brak as regards the right to certain pasture lands, which on one occasion called for the interference of the military, but without any serious consequences. On the 3rd instant, however, the Druzes proceeded to take possession of the two villages above mentioned, and some of the troops endeavoured to prevent them, which resulted in a collision between them. Very exaggerated reports were immediately spread in Damascus respecting this affair, such as, for instance, that fifty, seventy, and even upwards of one hundred men had been killed on the side of the Turks; and these rumours seemed to be verified by the haste which the military authorities exhibited in dispatching reinforcements to the Hauran.

On the 5th instant, I had the honour to telegraph to your Excellency reporting the above-mentioned occurrence. It was difficult at the time to ascertain the truth of these reports, but, as far as I have been able to learn since then, it seems that some kind of encounter took place between the military and the Druzes, and that one sergeant and two men were killed on the side of the Turks.

The Druzes have, moreover, succeeded in taking possession of the two villages of Mismieh and Shaara, which they at present occupy. On the 8th instant, the Sloot Arabs, who inhabit the Sedja, made an effort to dislodge the Druzes from the villages in question, but were unable to do so, eleven men on their side being killed, and five on that of the Druzes. His Excellency the Governor-General, acting, I believe, under instructions from Constantinople, appears to be unwilling to take any extreme measures against the Druzes at present, and, on the 9th instant, four of the leading men among them arrived in Damascus, it is said, on the invitation of his Excellency, in order to state their grievances, and to come to some arrangement which will prevent further disturbance. They have had several interviews with his Excellency, and are still in Damascus, but I am not aware that anything definite has as yet been settled. It is reported that Hussein Fevzi Pasha, a short time ago Commander-in-chief of the 5th Army Corps at Damascus, is expected daily from Constantinople, and that as he was somewhat popular in Syria, and maintained friendly relations with the Hauran Druzes, he will be able to assist in pacifying them, and allaying the present troubles.

So far, however, the question remains in suspense.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

P.S. *April* 15.—Hussein Fevzi Pasha, the Mushir of the 5th Army Corps, arrived in Damascus this morning from Beyrout.

J. D.

No. 8.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 230.)

Constantinople, May 10, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting that tranquillity is maintained generally in Syria, except in the Hauran.

He states, however, that bribery has again become prevalent among the officials, and is not prevented by the present Governor, Wassa Pasha. In this he confirms what I have heard from other quarters with regard to the Lebanon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 28.)

Beyrout, April 16, 1886.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 22 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that tranquillity continues to be maintained in Syria, except in the Hauran, where difficulties have arisen with the Druses, on which Mr. Consul Dickson will doubtless report in detail.

I do not attach much importance to this matter, as Hussein Fevzi Pasha arrived yesterday to replace Ahmet Wefik Pasha (whose services are required elsewhere) as Mushir of the 5th Corps, and as he has had some previous experience of the country, and enjoys the confidence of the varied population of the Hauran, I have little doubt that he will soon be able to settle any difficulties that may have arisen with the different tribes who inhabit that outlying district, which, from the time of the Romans, has ever been a source of anxiety to the authorities in Syria.

Although I am able to report in general that the state of Syria is satisfactory, still the minds of the population are much excited by the events which are passing elsewhere, of which we receive vague and unreliable information from time to time by the newspapers.

I regret to report, from information which reaches me from different quarters, that since the decease last autumn of the late Vali, bribery and corruption amongst the functionaries of the Porte, to which Hamdi Pasha did his utmost to put a stop, have again become the rule, and I have reason to believe that the present Vali, Nashid Pasha, encourages it to his own advantage.

Still more do I regret that this state of affairs has for some time existed in the Lebanon, where posts in the public service are openly bought and sold. Last autumn a friend of mine whom I have known from childhood told me that he was offered a small post in the Administration, provided he paid a sum equivalent to more than one year's salary, but he prudently refused to accept the appointment, reflecting that before he had time to reap any advantage from his new situation he might have to make way for a higher bidder. How far Wassa Pasha is acquainted with what goes on in his district I cannot say, but I trust, for the credit of his Excellency, that such things are done without his knowledge and consent, as in the time of his predecessor, Rustem Pasha, these scandals were unknown.

In general, the Lebanon is governed by Wassa Pasha in conformity with the Règlement, and no complaints reach me as to the administration of justice.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. J. ELDRIDGE.

P.S. *April* 26.—Owing to an attack of indisposition, which for a time partially deprived me of sight, this despatch was overlooked, and not sent by the first mail after it was dated.

G. J. E.

No. 9.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 234.)

Constantinople, May 10, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, stating that the difficulty between the Druses and the authorities in the Hauran, reported in his despatch No. 14 of the 15th April, which was forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 212 of the 27th ultimo, has apparently been satisfactorily settled.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Consul Dickson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 16.)

Damascus, May 1, 1886.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 14 of the 14th ultimo, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the difficulty in the Hauran between the authorities and the Druses has, apparently for the present ,been satisfactorily settled. The arrival of the Mushir Hussein Fevzi Pasha, which I had the honour to mention in my despatch above referred to, has had a salutary effect in quieting any threatened disturbance, and the Druses, who appear to be somewhat divided amongst themselves, and unwilling to carry matters to extremities, were persuaded, a few days ago, to retire from the two villages in the Ledja, Mismieh and Shaara, which they were anxious to occupy. The two villages in question are situated in such a manner as to command the principal entrance to the inaccessible region of the Ledja, which has always been looked upon as a place of refuge for the disorderly, and the Druses have for a long while past coveted their possession. The concilitory attitude, however, of the Governor-General, and the popularity of the Mushir among the Druses, have been, so far, effectual in bringing about an amicable settlement with the latter, and tranquillity has again been restored in the Hauran.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 10.

Consul Jago to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 4.)

Jeddah, April 27, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to refer to my preceding despatch No. 3, and to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting the quelling of the Bedouin disturbances at Yambo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 10.

Consul Jago to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 15.)

Jeddah, April 27, 1886.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 12, dated the 5th instant, respecting Bedouin disturbances at Yambo, I have the honour to report that the Turkish troops recently defeated the Beni Ibrahim in their own district, inflicting upon them a loss of 150 killed besides wounded, compelling them to submit, surrender their arms, and pay up arrears of taxes. The Turkish loss is reported at two killed and five wounded.

This disturbance is therefore regarded as finally quelled.

I may mention that the tribe in question forms no part of the great tribe of the Harbié which inhabit the Hedjaz northwards from Mecca to Medina and the Egyptian frontier, but is a small tribe localized in the district of Yembo.

After the final engagement, the Turkish corvette "Edirné" left Yembo for El Wedj with 100 troops on board, destined, I am informed, to garrison, in conjunction with the small force of Egyptians stationed there, that Egyptian frontier post. This measure, it is said, has been adopted by agreement between the Turkish and Egyptian Government for the protection of the Bedouin tribes in the vicinity who are menaced with the imposition of tribute "zakat" by the Emir of the Jebel Shammar, Ibu Raschid.

Ibu Raschid has, I am informed, been secretly providing himself with rifles from the Soudan rebels during the past twelve months, smuggled into this country at Jeddah by his agents.

The Turkish corvette "Edirné" returned here to-day with 500 troops on board

from Yembo, and 19 prisoners taken from the Beni Ibrahim; 250 men remain at Yembo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 11.

Consul Jago to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 5.)
Jeddah, May 17, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte reporting a fanatical outbreak between Jeddah and Mecca.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 11.

Consul Jago to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 16.)
Jeddah, May 17, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that a few days since a native of the Soudan living at Hadaa, a village on the Jeddah-Mecca road, having seduced a number of slaves by claiming supernatural powers, proclaimed a "jehad," or holy war, giving himself out as a Mahdi, cut the telegraph wire, killed and wounded an officer and two men of the Government troopers, and proceeded to plunder the village.

Troops arriving in haste from Mecca and Jeddah having surrounded the village, fire was opened upon the band, numbering twelve persons, of whom nine were killed and decapitated, their heads being afterwards publicly exposed at Jeddah and Mecca.

Of the three who escaped, one was shortly afterwards caught, taken to Mecca, and publicly decapitated. Strict search is being made for the other two.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 12.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received June* 19.)

(No. 308.)
Constantinople, June 14, 1886.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 234 of the 10th May, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting a breach of faith on the part of the authorities in imprisoning two of the Druze Chiefs who had come to Damascus, with the promise of a safe return, to negotiate with the Vali.

Mr. Dickson states that this may give rise to a recurrence of the recent disturbances.

I beg to inclose also a copy of another despatch from Consul Dickson, reporting an incident which took place on the anniversary of the Sultan's birthday, when the Greek Catholic Patriarch was ill-treated by the mob.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 12.

Consul Dickson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 17.)
Damascus, May 31, 1886.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 16 of the 1st instant, in which I reported the termination of the differences that existed between the authorities of Damascus

and the Druzes of the Hauran, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that a recent breach of faith on the part of the authorities has tended to revive the feeling of disaffection among the Druzes.

Two of the four Druze Chiefs, whose arrival in Damascus to negotiate with the Vali I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 14 of the 14th ultimo, have been arrested and imprisoned by order of his Excellency, on the plea that they had incited the other Druzes to occupy the villages of Mismieh and Shaara contrary to the wishes of the Turkish authorities, and that treasonable correspondence with some of the Bedouin tribes had been found in their possession. These two Chiefs, whose names are Abou-Abdé-el-Atrash and Kassim-el-Halibi, had ventured to have an interview with the Governor-General, on the assurance that they would be allowed to return to the Hauran in safety, after seeing his Excellency, but they have been kidnapped and are now in prison. The incident has caused considerable sensation among the Druzes, and unfavourable comments have been passed on the want of faith of the Governor-General, and it is not improbable that further difficulties may be the result in the Hauran.

The authorities have, in the meanwhile, ordered the construction of a military station on the borders of the Ledja between the villages of Mismieh and Shaara.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

Consul Dickson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 18.)
Damascus, May 31, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency an incident that occurred in this city on the anniversary of the birthday of His Majesty the Sultan, and which might have led to serious consequences, but which happily terminated without any grave result.

Whilst his Eminence the Greek Catholic Patriarch was returning from paying the usual visit of congratulation to the Governor-General on the occasion of the feast, a street urchin, who had been running after his Eminence's carriage, became entangled in the wheels, was very seriously injured, and was thought by some of the bystanders to have been killed. The Mussulman mob immediately stopped the carriage, began to ill-treat the coachman, and called upon the Patriarch, who was dressed in his official robes, to alight, but his Eminence kept his presence of mind, refused to leave the carriage, and endeavoured to appease the angry mob. His carriage, however, was dragged about for nearly half-an-hour in a most unceremonious manner, his Eminence being literally mobbed, and it is difficult to say how the affair might have ended had not an officer of police arrived on the scene, and, entering the carriage, conducted his Eminence to his Patriarchal residence. Had the Cavass who accompanied his Eminence offered any resistance to the populace the consequences might have been serious.

His Excellency the Mushir immediately dispatched an Aide-de-camp to the Patriarch to express his regret at the occurrence, and on the following day the Governor-General sent his Dragoman to wait upon his Eminence with the same object; but the incident in question is an indication of very bad management on the part of the police, which has never been in a more inefficient state than during the last few months. Although Damascus is a densely populated and fanatical city there are no policemen to be seen in the streets, the few zaptiehs who have to keep order being stationed near the gates of the town, and the want of security at present is greater than it has been for a considerable time past.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 13.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 218.)

Foreign Office, July 6, 1886.

Sir,

NOW that the dangers which threatened the Porte from the revolution in Eastern Roumelia and from the hostile attitude of Greece have been averted, Her Majesty's Government trust that the attention of the Sultan and his Ministers may be directed to questions of internal reform, and that, in the consideration of that subject, the means of improving the condition of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey may not be neglected.

The devotion with which the Mussulman population of those provinces has recently responded to their Sovereign's call upon the military resources of the Empire has commanded the admiration of Europe. There has been at the same time a notable absence of attempts on the part of the Christian communities to increase the embarrassments of the Porte by agitation or seditious movements, at a time when there might have been more than usual difficulty in repressing them. It would be a graceful and politic act on His Majesty's part to make some acknowledgment of this loyalty, by a serious endeavour to remedy the defects which admittedly exist in the administration of that part of his dominions. The temporary absence from the country of a large portion of the able-bodied male population will too probably occasion considerable distress, and any exertions on the part of the authorities to remove or mitigate evils of long standing will at this moment be all the more gratefully received. The events of the last few months go far to show that those feelings of discontent and impatience which are known to some extent to exist, and which might at any time be intensified by untoward circumstances, would be allayed by simple measures directed towards improving the material condition of the people and developing the resources of the country. Her Majesty's Government have repeatedly pointed out the necessity for such measures. They have urged on the Porte the introduction of Reforms in the collection of the taxes and the administration of justice, a more careful selection and supervision of the local officials, more effectual provision for the security of life and property, for the preservation of law and order, and for the protection of the industrious and peaceful portion of the inhabitants of the eastern provinces from the depredations of the Kurds. All these reforms, in addition to their effect on public feeling, would operate to the advantage of the Imperial revenues, and any progress towards keeping the Kurdish tribes under proper control would also tend to remove a source of constant irritation and danger on the Persian frontier.

The efforts of Her Majesty's Government during the recent troubles have been directed to the maintenance of the settlement effected under the Treaty of Berlin in the sense most favourable to the peace and tranquillity of the Ottoman Empire. Their policy in this respect has been dictated by feelings of sincere friendship for Turkey and of respect for Treaty obligations. It is from the same motives that they feel it incumbent on them to urge, whenever the opportunity offers, the duty of fulfilling the engagements of the LXIst Article of the Treaty of Berlin. The absence of all serious attempt to introduce the reforms promised in that Article is, in their opinion, a source of danger to the future integrity of Turkey, and might at a critical moment tend to embarrass and even paralyze the friendly sympathies of the Signatory Powers.

Your Excellency will find in Earl Granville's despatch to the Earl of Dufferin No. 108 of the 5th April, 1883, a brief recapitulation of the representations which had up to that time been made to His Majesty the Sultan and to the Porte on the subject. Those representations had resulted only in certain promises—promises which had remained unfulfilled.

Three years have passed since that communication was made by Lord Dufferin, but nothing has been done, and the lapse of time that has intervened has only rendered the warning more applicable. The attention of the Powers parties to the Treaty of Berlin has been diverted to other subjects of more immediate urgency, and Her Majesty's Government have for a time desisted from pressing those general measures of reform which were contemplated by the Treaty. They have confined themselves to bringing under the notice of the Turkish Ministers any startling instances of misgovernment which have been reported by Her Majesty's Consular officers, and which appeared to call for immediate action. But recent events should have convinced the Porte that the subject is not one which it can afford to

neglect. Never was there a moment in the history of Turkey when it was more necessary for the Sultan to be able to reckon on the developed resources of a contented and united Empire. The prospects in the East are far from reassuring; forces are at work of which it is impossible to foresee the development, but which are added to the ordinary causes of disquietude in that region. These dangers cannot be effectually dealt with by an army, however powerful, or by the most vigilant police. If they are to be confronted successfully, it must be by a Government which can appeal to the wisdom and toleration of its rule as its surest defence against internal agitation, and in its contented subjects can find the strongest bulwark against external aggression. Her Majesty's Government feel, therefore, that they would be wanting in frankness and true friendship if they did not again call the attention of the Sultan and his Ministers to the need for administrative reforms. They do not wish on this occasion to recommend any specific scheme, though your Excellency will find ample materials in the archives of Her Majesty's Embassy for the discussion of the subject in detail if the opportunity should offer. Nor do they desire to advocate the claims of any particular districts, or any religion or class. They agree in the preference which has on several occasions been expressed by the Sultan for a system which should be applicable to all his subjects both in Europe and Asia, and should tend to promote the common prosperity. But they think it unfortunate that measures even of partial inquiry and redress should be delayed where they are urgently needed, pending the discussion of more comprehensive schemes. The material point in their opinion is that a commencement should be made, no matter how simple, provided it be practical, and that the path of reform when once entered upon should be steadily persevered in.

One matter of primary importance on which too much stress cannot be laid is the selection of honest and capable men as Governors with some reasonable stability in their tenure of office.

The question attracts attention in this country, and is the subject of questions in Parliament. Her Majesty's Government have avoided and deferred the publication of correspondence which Parliament is entitled to demand, but which could not fail in the present condition of the question to produce an unfavourable impression on the public mind in England. They would be glad that the publication, whenever it takes place, should enable them to announce at least a commencement in the introduction of reforms, and evidence of a resolution to pursue them. Such a policy in their opinion is doubly necessary, both to remove the causes of discontent and disaffection, which are themselves the greatest incentive and assistance to foreign aggression, and to avert the invincible repugnance that would assuredly be felt in this country to any action which Great Britain might be urged to take for the retention of these provinces by Turkey, unless it were believed that such action was being taken on behalf of well-governed and contented populations, that had no wish to change rulers who had established a title to their affection and confidence.

I have to instruct your Excellency to take the course and the opportunity which you may deem most judicious in bringing these considerations before the Sultan and the Turkish Ministers. Her Majesty's Government will await with interest your account of the manner in which your representations are received, but under present circumstances they wish to leave you full discretion to postpone discussion of the matter if you should think it inexpedient to enter upon it at this moment.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 14.

Consul-General Abbott to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 23.)

Tabreez, June 26, 1886.

My Lord,

HEARING that Dr. Cochran was about to proceed to Van, I directed his attention to various points upon which I was desirous of obtaining information, and which I thought might prove of interest to Her Majesty's Government.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship a most able and interesting Report which I have received from that gentleman.

It is satisfactory to note that the Sultan is constructing roads in his Kurdish dominions, and that His Majesty is doing his utmost to maintain order amongst his tribal subjects.

Although the Christian races are not exempt from sufferings, they are gradually advancing along the path of progress, and it is to be hoped will eventually secure for themselves a share of those blessings which have contributed to the greatness and power of England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure in No. 14.

Dr. Cochran to Consul-General Abbott.

Oroomiah, June 17, 1886.

I FOUND your favour of the 12th May waiting for me when I returned from Van last Saturday. I imagine you are not so much in need of information which I may have now as you were a month ago, as General Wagner tells me the Persian authorities received satisfactory information from Turkey that she had only the friendliest intentions towards Persia.

There are about 3,000 Turkish troops in Van; three or four companies at Surra, a day's journey from Kotur; 3,000 in Alback. This district of Alback (in a military sense) includes Bashkaleh, Julamerk, and Gawar. Bashkaleh is now made a vilayet. At Gawar a Mutessarif resides, while Julamerk is a Kaïmakamlik. Nehri (the Sheikh's place) is the seat of a Kaïmakam or Mudir, while even Koshib, a town half-way between Van and Bashkaleh, is recently made the seat of a Kaïmakam.

In the vicinity of Bashkaleh we found several villages deserted of their male population, as Turkish officers were drafting the Kurds for military service.

They have also begun a fine military road from Bashkaleh in the direction of Van and Gawar, a fine graded road. The workmen are unpaid.

The British Vice-Consul at Van, Mr. Barnham, told me that whatever extra troops they had about Van were for the purpose of keeping down and taxing the Hakkari Kurds. The construction of this road, the stronger garrisons among the Kurds, the establishment of higher civil offices in these parts, go to confirm this. But if the Kurds are taxed for the past, the Nestorians will be too. Neither of them are able to meet the demands of the Government.

Year by year the Christians in Eastern Turkey are being ground down more thoroughly.

In the vicinity of Harpoot hundreds are leaving yearly and going to the United States from the Armenians. The roads from here to Van were never safer. We went by Kotur and returned by Bashkaleh, Somai, and Beradost.

There is one Chief in Tergawar, the son of Hassan Beg, who was captured by the Ameer two years ago, who still does as he pleases, bringing terror on all the Christians there, and plundering and even killing them as he will. I hope General Wagner can do something to settle this difficulty. His name is Hesso.

No. 15.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 344.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 5, 1886.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Mr. Acting Consul Devey, reporting the appearance in the district of Mardin of large swarms of locusts, and great damage therefrom to the various crops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Acting Consul Devey to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, June* 22, 1886.

I HAVE the honour to report that, according to information received from our Agent at Diarbekir large numbers of locusts have lately appeared in the district of

Mardin, where their eggs were laid last year. Swarms of locusts are also coming up from the regions of Mosoul. Mr. Boyajian learns they are travelling in the direction of Sert and Diarbekir. As to the extent of damage done to the crops reports are conflicting; according to one account they have not as yet injured the cereals, but others state that their ravages are very considerable, and that wherever they alight everything green is devoured. Barley, though not yet entirely ripe, is being gathered in in order to be saved from destruction; but wheat, cotton, vines, and vegetables will naturally be left to their fate. The prices of all provisions are gradually rising, and another famine, even were it not to be so severe as the late one, would be a great calamity, entailing additional suffering on the already poverty-stricken people.

One or two merchants, who lately arrived here from Mardin after a journey of some weeks, have informed me that there were but few locusts there during the spring, and are of opinion that the greater number of these insects now there must have come from Mosoul. The month of March was very cold in those districts, and a large quantity of eggs was thus destroyed. They also state that the inhabitants of Mardin collected and destroyed as much as 200 kilehs (the kilch being a grain measure holding about 50 lbs. weight of barley) of the eggs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 16.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 347. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 7, 1886.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Mr. Longworth, inclosing an extract from the "Levant Herald" respecting the Laz chieftain Ali Pasha.

Mr. Longworth states that Ali Pasha has been invited to take up his residence in this capital, and points out that, should he do so, it would much tend to check Laz depredations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

Consul Longworth to Sir E. Thornton.

Sir, *Trebizond, June* 28, 1886.

I INCLOSE herewith, for your Excellency's perusal, an extract from the "Levant Herald" of the 18th instant, containing some particulars about Tchuruk Souli Ali Pasha.

This notorious Chieftain of some 50,000 Georgian Laz emigrants, exercising, as he does, a paramount influence of a demoralizing nature in these parts, must not be lost sight of, so far as the affairs of the province are concerned.

As a feudal lord (Dereh Bey) Ali Pasha was appeased by the Porte in his warlike demonstrations against the cession of Batoum to Russia, by being created an honorary Major-General, with a pension of £T. 600 a-year, a pecuniary favour which he continues to enjoy, with some other advantages, by furnishing the Palace with Georgian slaves of great beauty.

With his antecedents as a robber chief, it is naturally suspected that in protecting Laz brigands he shares in their booty, and connives with them in their outrages, and it is therefore hoped that the Porte, in inviting him now to settle at Constantinople, holds in view his definite removal from these regions.

His intention is to proceed to the capital after the Baïram festivity, in order to pay homage to the Sultan for having conferred on him the distinction of the Nichan-i-Imtiaz in silver.

Should he be retained there, that peace from Laz depredations is likely to be realized which the Vali's recent visit to Trebizond failed to establish, as is only too evident

from fresh instances of crime, among which number an act of murder near Kerassond and two near Uniah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 16.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of June 18, 1886.

DISTINCTION IMPÉRIALE.—Sa Majesté Impériale a conféré la médaille en argent du Nichan-Imtiaz au Général Tchuruk Souli Ali Pacha, émigré de Batoum présentement établi à Orlou. On se rappelle qu'Ali Pacha s'est distingué à la tête de ses volontaires Lazes lors de la dernière guerre Turco-Russe, qu'il a pris une part active à la défense de Batoum, et qu'il a empêché notamment l'investissement complet de cette place par les Russes. Il convient de dire au reste que la Division du Rion commandée par le Général Ocklobjio n'avait pas un rôle offensif principal, la campagne devant être menée par le corps, de tous le plus fort, parti d'Alexandropol sous le commandement du Général Loris Mélikoff. Ceci n'enlève rien au mérite et aux efforts patriotiques de Tchuruk Souli Ali Pacha.

Ce brave Général avait tout dernièrement offert au Gouvernement Impérial le concours des fidèles Lazes, qui l'ont suivi dans son émigration en Turquie, et il s'était engagé à les équiper à ses frais, en les dirigeant sur les points de la frontière qui lui seraient indiqués en Roumélie. Mais le Ministère de la Guerre a déclaré cette offre patriotique, en disant que le chiffre des troupes massées sur les frontières de Grèce, de Roumélie et en Macédoine lui permettait de faire face à tous les dangers. Ali Pacha, qui est assez riche personnellement, jouit en outre d'une pension assez large qui lui est faite par l'État. Il a été invité par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan à venir se fixer à Constantinople.

No. 17.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received August 1.)

(No. 371.) *Therapia, July 26, 1886.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Mr. Barnham, reporting certain disturbances which lately occurred at Van on the occasion of the election of members to serve in the Armenian National Council.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 13.) *Van, July 8, 1886.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit, for the favour of your Excellency's perusal, a Report upon the disturbances which occurred in the city of Van on Sunday, the 4th instant, on the occasion of the election of members to serve in the Armenian National Council of this city.

Your Excellency is probably aware that, by virtue of a Constitution granted to the Armenian community by the late Sultan Abdul Aziz in 1860, the Armenians are allowed freedom of action in the management of their educational and religious affairs, and upon this principle they are permitted in each vilayet to elect a National Council once in every ten years.

Education among the Armenians of Van is extremely limited, and of the poorest description. Of the entire Armenian population in the city of Van, a trifle over 6 per cent. attend school, and in the villages of the vilayet about 2 per cent. only, and under existing circumstances there is no fostering spirit which should produce a better state of things here. There are, it is true, among the leading Armenians of Van men of liberal views, who, if elected to membership in the National Council, would certainly

exercise a beneficial control over these important questions. Unfortunately, however, the destinies of the people are in the hands of an ecclesiastic, extremely ignorant, of narrow views, and unscrupulous character. I allude to Boghos Effendi, the Acting Bishop of Van. Transferred by Mgr. Krimian from the seclusion of a monastery on an island of Lake Van to the leadership of the community in this city, he brought with him all the bigotry which such a life so often engenders. When Mgr. Krimian, whose kindly influence was always exercised in the cause of progress, was summoned to Constantinople, Boghos Effendi, freed from restraint, at once took effective measures to destroy the influence of the party of progress. Aware of the innate distrust with which Hamid Pasha, the Vali of Van, regards the entire Armenian community, he determined to utilize it to his own ends. He became the daily associate and warm friend of the Vali, to whom he denounced as disaffected to the Government those who were especially opposed to his policy. The result has been that many have been sent into exile by his influence. He stands forth as the champion of ignorance, and has naturally gained bitter enemies.

The last election of a National Council in Van took place seven years ago; therefore, a new election was not due until three years later. Boghos Effendi, having resolved that, while he held his present office, the National Council should be entirely subservient to his views, obtained authority from the Patriarchate to proceed to a new election, and notice was given that it should be carried into effect in the churches of Van last Sunday. For several weeks previously canvassing was actively carried on in the city and villages, and it is a remarkable fact that some of the most energetic canvassers on behalf of Boghos Effendi's party were the Vali of Van and the Timour Oghlous, the most influential Mussulman family here. The Vali prosecuted a canvass in the markets, passing from shop to shop, and advising the people. Your Excellency will no doubt perceive that when an official, holding the position of the Vali of Van, takes upon himself to pursue such a course, his action amounts to intimidation. On Saturday, Boghos Effendi, hearing that an effort would be made to prevent the election, wrote officially to the Vali, expressing fears of a public disturbance, and asking that troops might be stationed at the several churches. When the hour for the election arrived a body of troops was stationed in the court-yard of each church. On the commencement of the proceedings cries were raised that the election was illegal and should not be held. Then, in some instances, the ballot boxes were broken, and, on the troops attempting to make arrests, fighting commenced. The people pelted the soldiers with sun-dried bricks, and the soldiers pushed the people back at the point of the bayonet. Much exaggeration has been made as to the extent of damage inflicted on both sides. No fatality occurred, and no serious wounding. About thirty persons were arrested. The fighting occurred in and near four churches of the city and suburbs. In the remaining churches the election was completed. It remains to be seen whether the election will be carried out in its entirety. On receipt of the intelligence, the Patriarchate telegraphed to Mgr. Ormanian, the newly-consecrated Bishop of Erzeroum, who was then in Tiflis on his way from Etchmiatzin, to hasten to Van and assume the control of affairs provisionally; but he arrived and still is seriously ill, and, consequently, has been unable to do anything either to reconcile the two parties, or to decide whether the election shall be carried out or not. I shall probably send your Excellency a further report upon the subject as soon as I hear what course Mgr. Ormanian will adopt.

It happened that the newly-appointed Vali of Hekkiari, his Excellency Fikri Pasha, was that day in Van, the guest of the Vali of Van for a few days previous to his departure for his own vilayet. Willing, no doubt, to ingratiate himself with his host, he sent an absurdly exaggerated telegram to the Porte, announcing that the Armenians had attempted to revolt, had attacked and wounded the Imperial troops, and that the most serious consequences would have resulted had not his Excellency the Vali, Hamid Pasha, taken wise and energetic measures to preserve the peace. In consequence, His Majesty the Sultan has conferred upon the Vali the First Order of the Medjidié, and the Procureur-Général, who is now engaged in the prosecution of the people who are in prison, has also received a decoration. Certain promotions have also taken place among the soldiers who took part in the proceedings. It is expected that further arrests will be made, followed in some cases by banishment, and there is a general feeling of disgust and indignation against Boghos Effendi for provoking so untoward an event. Indeed, the conduct of this person has been most reprehensible. Instead of retiring from the scene when he found that his proceedings had caused such serious divisions among his people, he has acted throughout as a fire-brand, and wilfully given the Turkish authorities an excuse for renewing and intensifying those

measures of repression which have been in force under the rule of the present Vali, and which were quite uncalled-for. I think that the Vali, if the facts as I have stated them were known, would have been censured rather than rewarded. Nothing could be more irritating to the Armenians than to be dictated to by him in matters solely affecting their own religious concerns, and I feel sure that had the soldiers not been called out the situation would not have been thus aggravated.

I would be glad if your Excellency would, whenever occasion presents itself, discountenance the ideas which have been thus spread abroad in Constantinople as to the disloyalty of the Armenians here, and exercise your kind influence to prevent undue severity towards the persons implicated in the disturbance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 18.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received August 14.)

(No. 381.) *Therapia, July 31, 1886.*
My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 371 of the 26th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship copy of a further despatch which I have received from Mr. Barnham respecting the Armenian riot at Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 14.) *Van, July 20, 1886.*
Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 13 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that a telegram was received on Saturday last from the Patriarchate dismissing Boghos Effendi from his office as Acting Bishop of Van, and annulling the recent elections.

Mgr. Hohannes Rustchuklian, a Prelate of high standing in the Armenian Church, has been appointed Vicar ("Murakhass") of the Armenians in Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 19.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received August 14.)

(No. 387. Confidential.) *Therapia, August 10, 1886.*
My Lord,

FROM a telegram addressed by his Government to my Russian colleague, which has accidentally fallen into my hands, it would appear that, on the 21st ultimo, more than 200 Turkish Kurds, armed with Peabody rifles, having crossed the frontier of the Gourmaly district, in the Province of Erivan, have attacked the Russian Yezidis near Kuradjann, and carried off 1,000 sheep. Firing continued for several days. There were killed and wounded on both sides.

About the 25th ultimo many thousand Kurds assembled on the frontier, showing an intention to cross it. The authorities of the Caucasus found themselves obliged to send troops there.

The Russian Ambassador is instructed to invite the Porte to repress these disorders, which might bring about regrettable complications.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

No. 20.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received August 14.)

(No. 399.) *Therapia, August 10, 1886.*
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Mr. Dickson reporting the departure from Damascus of the caravan of pilgrims for Mecca.

Mr. Dickson also comments on the action of the Vali in showing special attention to a Jew who has lately renounced his nationality to become an Ottoman subject, and on his attitude in general towards foreign-protected subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Consul Dickson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 22.) *Damascus, July 26, 1886.*
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the "hadj," or caravan of pilgrims for Mecca, left Damascus early on the morning of the 8th instant, with considerable pomp and ceremony. His Majesty the Sultan having this year sent a new banner to accompany the caravan, there was much curiosity evinced on the part of the inhabitants of Damascus to view the procession. The number of pilgrims, however, was not so large as usual, as the "hadj," having started in the hot season, many of them took the sea route, and embarked at Beyrout. About 800 Persians and other Asiatics arrived in order to join the caravan, among whom was the Indian Princess, Tajdar Bahu Sahiba, a relative of the ex-King of Oude, but she preferred proceeding by sea, and left for Beyrout on the 22nd instant. She was accompanied by a suite of forty-six persons, all British Indian subjects.

His Excellency the Vali, who had spent the fast of Ramadan in Damascus, and remained to take part in the ceremony attending the departure of the "hadj," left Damascus on the 22d instant for Mount Lebanon, where he will pass a few days. His Excellency intends afterwards to proceed to Tripoli, and other parts of this province, on a tour of inspection. The action of his Excellency a few days previous to his departure, in visiting, and showing considerable attention to, a Jew who had renounced his Austrian nationality and had become an Ottoman subject, called forth much comment from the people in general in this city. The social position of the Jew being such as would not merit a visit from the Governor-General, the object of his Excellency in calling upon him was attributed to an intention to mark his approval of the step taken by the Jew in changing his nationality, and it is stated that his Excellency complimented him warmly on the occasion, for having become a subject of the Porte. I have the honour to state that the authorities in Syria are at present refusing to recognize, as they have already done in the case of the British Indian subjects, the right to foreign protection of many persons domiciled in Damascus, who have hitherto been in the habit of claiming such protection. The fact, moreover, that the Vali called upon the Jew above mentioned on the 14th instant, the day of the French National Fête, at a time when my French colleague—to whom his Excellency only sent his interpreter—was receiving official visits of congratulation, has elicited still further comment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 21.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 211.) *Foreign Office, August 28, 1886, 8·45 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

REUTER states that you have presented a note on reforms in Armenia drawn up by late Government, but forwarded to you by me. I knew nothing of the note being sent. What are the facts?

No. 22.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received August* 29, 9·15 P.M.)

(No. 157.) *Constantinople, August* 29, 1886, 5·30 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram No. 211 of yesterday.

On the 16th instant I delivered to Said Pasha in person a Memorandum containing the substance of Lord Rosebery's despatch No. 218 of the 6th ultimo. My despatch sent off yesterday will show that it was not well received either by the Porte or by the Sultan. I am, however, inclined to think that their displeasure is giving way to reasoning reflection.

No. 23.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received by telegraph, August* 29.)

(No. 448. Ext. 157.) *Therapia, August* 29, 1886.
My Lord,

WITH reference to the telegram I received from your Lordship No. 211 of yesterday's date, I have this day reported to you, by telegraph, that I presented to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in person, on the 16th instant, a Memorandum embodying the substance of the despatch No. 218 of the 6th July from the Earl of Rosebery.

From the despatches forwarded by yesterday's messenger your Lordship will perceive that it did not meet with a favourable reception either at the Porte or the Palace, but I am disposed to believe that after due reflection that feeling of displeasure will diminish.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

No. 24.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 212.) *Foreign Office, August* 29, 1886, 10·40 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram No. 157.

Did you deliver note on the discretion allowed you by Lord Rosebery, or on special instruction by Her Majesty's present Government?

No. 25.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received August* 30, 3·10 P.M.)

(No. 158.) *Constantinople, August* 30, 1886, 12·20 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram No. 212 of yesterday.

I delivered Memorandum, not "note," by virtue of discretionary instructions given me in Lord Rosebery's despatch No. 218, having received no others.

No. 26.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received by telegraph, August* 30.)

(No. 449. Ext. 158.) *Therapia, August* 30, 1886.
My Lord,

I HAD the honour to report, by telegraph to-day, with reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 213 of the 29th instant, that it was by virtue of the discretionary instructions contained in despatch No. 218 of the Earl of Rosebery that I presented a Memorandum and not a note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I had received no other instructions on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

No. 27.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir A. Paget.[a]

(No. 163.) *Foreign Office, August* 30, 1886.
Sir,

THE Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires asked me to-day what the note respecting Armenia was, which, according to the telegrams in the newspapers, had been presented to the Porte by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I showed M. Hengelmüller Lord Rosebery's despatch No. 218 to Sir E. Thornton of the 6th ultimo, a copy of which you will find in the Confidential Print respecting Asiatic Reforms, forwarded to your Excellency, and I explained to him in language similar to that used by me to Count Hatzfeldt, as recorded in the inclosed despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin,† the circumstances under which a Memorandum, founded on Lord Rosebery's above-mentioned despatch, had been presented to the Porte by Sir E. Thornton.

I am, &c.
(Signed) IDDESLEIGH.

No. 28.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 426.) *Foreign Office, August* 30, 1886.
Sir,

I SAID to the German Ambassador whom I saw to-day that it had not occurred to me, when his Excellency asked me a few days ago whether Her Majesty's Government had addressed a note to the Porte on the subject of Armenia, that he was referring to a despatch drawn up by my predecessor and sent by him to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, with liberty to use his own discretion as to its presentation. This had, of course, been done before the late Government left office, and it now appeared that Sir E. Thornton had, on his own judgment, presented a Memorandum to the Porte based upon the despatch, without thinking it necessary to communicate with me either before doing so or by telegram afterwards. I therefore knew nothing of the proceeding until to-day, when I received a telegram from him on the subject.

I gave Count Hatzfeldt, for his private information, a copy of the despatch in question, No. 218 of the 6th July last to Sir E. Thornton, which your Excellency will find among the printed papers forwarded to you respecting reforms in the Asiatic provinces of Turkey.

His Excellency asked me whether the Memorandum had been received with satisfaction. I replied that we were not yet in possession of Sir E. Thornton's account of what had taken place, but I understood from his telegram that it was not well received in the first instance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) IDDESLEIGH.

No. 29.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 270 B.) *Foreign Office, August* 30, 1886.
Sir,

AT the conclusion of my conversation to-day with Rustem Pasha respecting Bulgaria, his Excellency made inquiries respecting the Memorandum presented to the Porte by your Excellency on the subject of reforms in Asia Minor.

I explained to his Excellency that the Memorandum had been presented under the discretionary instructions given by my predecessor, and without the matter being again referred home.

Rustem Pasha observed that it was a pity that it had been presented, but to this remark I made no reply.

I am, &c.
(Signed) IDDESLEIGH.

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[a] Also to Sir J. S. Lumley (No. 228).

† No. 28.

No. 30.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 409.)
My Lord,

Therapia, August 17, 1886.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 308 of the 14th June, in which I transmitted a copy of a despatch from Mr. Dickson reporting the imprisonment of two Druze Chiefs of the Hauran, I have now the honour to forward a copy of a further despatch from that gentleman, stating that the Chiefs are still retained in prison by the Vali, and reporting the unfavourable impression produced thereby.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 30.

Consul Dickson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 21.)
Sir,

Damascus, July 24, 1886.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 17 of the 31st May last, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the two Druze Chiefs of the Hauran, Abou-Abdé-el-Atrash and Hussein-el-Halibi, are still retained in prison by the Vali, notwithstanding the report which was lately spread by the authorities that they would be liberated at the feast of the Bairam.

Their detention has not decreased the ill-feeling which has been exhibited towards the Government for some time past by the Hauran Druzes, and the action of the authorities has been unfavourably commented upon by even the natives of Damascus. The want of confidence in the good faith of the Government is shown by the following incident, which occurred a few days ago in the Hauran.

Sheikh Shibly-el-Atrash, one of the most powerful leaders of the Druzes in the Hauran, was summoned to Damascus by the Mushir to discuss the question of the liberation of the imprisoned Druze Chiefs, but he refused to obey the summons. An officer and seventy horsemen were accordingly dispatched from the military station of Mezra to the village of Aery, where he resided, with the intention of arresting him, and arrived there during the night. Shiekh Shibly, who on various pretexts delayed as long as possible giving them admittance to his house, armed himself and his servants thoroughly. He then received them very graciously, and insisted on entertaining them as his guests, but in the meanwhile secretly sent his emissaries to the neighbouring villages to collect his followers, and in a very short time 2,000 Druzes, well armed and mounted, appeared on the scene and surrounded the house. On seeing this the officer quietly retired with his men without attempting to execute his orders.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 31.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 428.)
My Lord,

Therapia, August 24, 1886.

IN order to carry out the instructions which I had the honour of receiving in the Earl of Rosebery's despatch No. 218 of the 6th ultimo, relating to the necessity of internal reform in the Asiatic provinces of Turkey, I deemed it advisable, and less likely to wound the sensitive feelings of His Majesty the Sultan, to embody the substance of the above-mentioned despatch in a Memorandum, and to take an opportunity of delivering it to his Excellency Said Pasha in person.

Mutatis mutandis, the Memorandum was prepared in the words of the despatch, and I availed myself of an interview which I had with his Excellency on the 16th instant to hand it to him, accompanied by a translation into French.

As soon as his Excellency became aware of the contents of the document, he showed a degree of irritation which he does not often exhibit, and did not receive it graciously. He said that he looked upon it as a very mistaken policy on the part of

Great Britain to be continually pressing this matter upon the attention of the Sublime Porte. With the scanty means which it had at its command it was a most difficult matter to deal with the abuses which might exist in Asiatic Turkey, to introduce healthy reforms and to ameliorate the condition of the people. Something, however, though not so much as the Ottoman Government desired, had been done, and his Excellency expressed his opinion that whilst Her Majesty's Consular officers were vigilant in reporting all the defects they might observe in the government of those provinces, they failed to inform their Government of the numerous improvements which had been effected. He added that the fact of my presenting the Memorandum in question was sufficient to render it much more difficult for the Ottoman Government to carry out the improvements and reforms which they were anxious to introduce than if no such pressure were brought to bear upon them.

I assured his Excellency that the recommendations contained in the Memorandum before him were made in the most friendly spirit; that it was the earnest wish of Her Majesty's Government that the strength and prosperity of the Ottoman Empire should be increased to the utmost, and that there was nothing which could contribute to its welfare so effectually as good government and the development of its ample resources. I reminded him that I had myself pointed out to him abuses which were being committed in different parts of the country, and which were undeniable. I begged his Excellency, however, to keep the Memorandum and examine it carefully, and I said that I would on a future occasion ask him to allow me some further conversation on the subject.

Since the above-mentioned interview, I have heard from various quarters that the Memorandum has caused a deal of excitement at the Porte, and that His Imperial Majesty in particular is extremely disturbed by it. My German colleague had an audience of His Majesty on the 20th instant, when the latter inveighed in strong terms against the contents of the document, qualifying it as a menace to Turkey. M. de Radowitz was so impressed by what the Sultan had said to him that he asked me the nature of the Memorandum, whereupon I thought it expedient to let him read it. His Excellency at once admitted the moderation and friendliness of its language, and expressed surprise that the Sultan should have been so excited about it, adding that it was nothing more than had been expressed in the Protocols of the Treaty of Berlin, but that he had imagined, from His Majesty's tone, that it was couched in much more energetic terms.

It had seemed to me that, considering the atrocious manner in which the Vilayet of Aleppo is now being governed by the Vali, Djemil Pasha, the circumstances of which must be well known to the Sultan and the Porte, the moment could not have been more opportune for presenting the Memorandum.

But considering the present critical state of the Bulgarian question, I am inclined to think that it may be more discreet not to renew the discussion of general reforms for the present, but to confine myself to particular instances, such as that of Aleppo. The seed has been sown, though I fear upon but poor ground; but it is still possible that it may produce some fruit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

No. 32.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 430.)
My Lord,

Therapia, August 27, 1886.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 428 of the 24th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Grand Vizier requested me to call upon him at the Porte yesterday afternoon. Shortly after I arrived there, Said Pasha joined us. After some conversation with regard to the affairs of Bulgaria, his Highness referred to the Memorandum which I had some days ago delivered to Said Pasha relating to reforms in the Asiatic provinces of Turkey.

Kiamil Pasha observed that His Imperial Majesty the Sultan was a good deal hurt by the language of this document, which appeared unnecessarily severe. It was true that Turkey, by the LXIst Article of the Treaty of Berlin, has engaged to carry out reforms in Armenia; but it must be remembered that the Treaty in question had been signed by the Turkish Plenipotentiaries almost under pressure; that Turkey was at that time in so depressed a position that her Plenipotentiaries were almost forced to

sign what was imposed upon them. Notwithstanding this pressure, the Ottoman Government had endeavoured to fulfil the engagements they had taken. Regular Tribunals had been established in almost every part of the Empire, schools had been founded, a police system had been organized, and brigandage had been in a great measure suppressed. His Highness further asserted that a number of other improvements had been effected, and that the Ottoman Government were still occupied in considering what further reforms could be instituted with advantage. It must be remembered, however, that these took time, and that it could not be expected that in so vast a territory institutions could be perfected in so short a period as had elapsed since the date of the Treaty of Berlin. His Highness complained that Her Majesty's Consular officers were fond of discovering all the defects which must still necessarily exist, without, at the same time, reporting the decided improvements which had taken place within the last few years. It was true that the Porte had not periodically communicated to the Powers what had been done, as were required by the Treaty, but this was a mere matter of form, which, he thought, might well be pardoned.

I assured the Grand Vizier that there was no intention of wounding the feelings of His Imperial Majesty, but that on the contrary the Memorandum was inspired by the purest friendship for Turkey; that it was both the sincere desire and the interest of Her Majesty's Government to see Turkey prosperous and powerful with a people satisfied with their Rulers and devoted to His Imperial Majesty. It was also of importance to Her Majesty's Government that the people of England should be satisfied that Turkey was governed honestly and with justice, and that the wants of her population were attended to. It would give me much pleasure to report to Her Majesty's Government the explanations given me by His Highness as to the reforms which had been already introduced, and the assurances that the Sublime Porte would not relax in its efforts to improve the local government of different portions of the Empire.

Kiamil Pasha proceeded to point out to me that it was England alone who considered it necessary to make observations on the subject, whilst the other Powers seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the progress which had been made. His Highness concluded by asking whether in presence of the assurances and explanations which he had given me, I would not consent to withdraw the Memorandum in question. I replied that this was impossible; that I was surprised, considering the friendly tone of the document, that such a request should be made to me. I maintained that its tone was most moderate, and to a certain extent Kiamil Pasha, who read it in English, agreed with me, whilst Said Pasha thought differently of the French translation. I also argued that if the other Powers had not made similar representations, it was a proof that we were more sincere and earnest friends of Turkey than they. I had also thought that the form of carrying out the instructions I had received was the most friendly, and that the Ottoman Government could not justly take exception to either the form or the substance. The moment, too, had appeared to me to be opportune; for it could not be denied that there existed just now a specimen of bad government at Aleppo which was most deplorable. His Highness interrupted me by saying that a Commission would soon proceed to inquire into the conduct of the Vali of that Vilayet, at which I expressed my satisfaction, and in reply to my inquiry when Saib Bey would start for his destination, His Highness said that it would probably be on Saturday next (to-morrow).

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

No. 33.

Mr. Fane to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received September 11.)

(No. 402.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 7, 1886.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting certain plundering incursions recently made by Kurdish tribes on the Russo-Turkish frontier.

An extract from a private letter which has come into my hands states that great disturbances lately broke out on the Turco-Persian frontier, where a Kurdish robber Chief, with 200 men, carried out wholesale depredations. After killing many Seids in the Persian territory, he crossed the frontier and attacked a few villages in the district

of Schemdina, set their crops on fire, killed many people, and retired on a strategic position between the Persian and Turkish frontier.

Now it is reported that, on both sides, large numbers of troops have been sent thither in order to arrest the Kurdish Chief.

On the other hand, some marauders belonging to the Shemriki Askiret, inhabiting the district of Mahmoudi, near Van, recently crossed the Russian frontier and attacked the Yezidi Kurds who inhabit the Plain of Sourmalou, from which place they succeeded in carrying away a large number of horses; but on strong remonstrances from the Russian Government to the Vali of Hekkiari upon the matter, the chief of the robbers, Youssouf Khan, was arrested, and all the booty being found in possession was restored to the owners.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Acting Consul Devey to Sir E. Thornton.

Erzeroum, August 24, 1886.

Sir,

SOME ten or twelve days ago a regrettable event took place on the Russo-Turkish frontier in the neighbourhood of Kara-Kilissa, a sub-district of the Bayazid Sandjak, which has resulted in the death of one man, and might have had far more serious consequences but for the prompt action of the Russian Government on the one hand, and the energy, courage, and firmness of the Mutessarif of Bayazid on the other.

The Jellali are a large Kurdish tribe who inhabit all the mountain ranges from and within the Persian border and along the Russo-Turkish boundary as far as Kara-Kilissa. It is said that were the whole tribe to act in unison, they would be able to raise nearly 10,000 mounted men, mostly armed with Burdan and Martini rifles, and well supplied with ammunition; but the Jellali, far from being one united people, are composed of twelve or fifteen clans of various numbers, bearing different names, and recognizing separate Chiefs. There are generally feuds between one and another of these clans, and not unfrequently among families of the same name.

The Sakanli clan, who count 2,000 fighting men, though dispersed over 100 miles distance, have, on the Sinek Dagh, near Kara-Kilissa, about 250 tents, with a Chief, Suleyi Ali. Lately there arose a dispute between these people and certain Yezids, about 500 strong, inhabiting the Russian frontier territory. Whether the Yezids were originally to blame for having trespassed on the Sakanli pasturing grounds, or whether the first encounter began with a small plundering foray of the Kurds, I am not yet sufficiently well informed to state. At all events, one of the Jellali, whilst attempting to plunder the Yezids, was killed by them on Russian territory; thereupon the Sakanli collected 300 horsemen, and made a large incursion upon the Yezids, carrying off 900 sheep and 27,000 roubles' worth of property. The Yezids appear to have retreated in utter confusion, for, though there was much firing on both sides, no one seems to have been even wounded.

The Russian Government, learning that "3,000" Kurds had crossed the frontier to plunder, ordered five battalions, with two guns, to Erivan to repel them, but by the time this force had arrived there, the exaggeration of the report being made evident, their further movement was suspended, and a general officer only, accompanied by a sufficient force, proceeded to the frontier to learn fuller details from the Yezids. Meantime, the Governor of Bayazid had gone directly to the Kurds and had already succeeded in obtaining the restitution of 750 of the stolen sheep and some other property, which he handed over to the owners. The Yezids seem to have been well satisfied with this prompt reparation, even more so than the Russian authorities, who, I am told, were at first inclined to take a rather high-handed view of the affair, and to have wished to reserve the chastisement of the Kurds for themselves; but I am given to understand that the Commissioners of the two Governments met near the frontier, and that the interview closed to the satisfaction of all parties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 34.

Mr. Fane to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received September 20.*)

(No. 475.) *Therapia, September* 14, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Devey, Acting Consul at Erzeroum, on the subject of the dismissal from his post of Ali Effendi, Mutessarif of Erzeroum, of whom Mr. Devey speaks in very high terms.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 34.

Acting Consul Devey to Sir E. Thornton.

(Confidential.) *Erzeroum, August* 23, 1886.

Sir,

IT is with regret that I have to inform your Excellency of the dismissal of Arabzade Ali Effendi from the post of Governor of the district of Erzeroum. His removal is solely due to the recent General Order for the suppression of central Mutessarifliks of vilayets.

Ali Effendi is a native of Erzeroum and a self-made man, and, albeit of little education, possesses considerable intelligence. He has acquired much local influence, and, when the Turkish Parliament was instituted, was elected a member for Erzeroum, but did not take his seat, owing to the short duration of that Assembly. He is of liberal views, free from fanaticism, generally anxious to see justice done, I believe fairly upright, and during his tenure of office for the last few years has succeeded in winning the esteem and respect of all classes of the people. But besides his not inconsiderable official experience, Ali Effendi possesses, as your Excellency may have gathered from the foregoing, special aptitudes for governing a mixed population, and, in particular, is entirely devoid of that unwholesome dread of Armenian revolution which still remains the stumbling-block of so many officials, great and small, in this Consular district. This gentleman, I am given to understand, will, at the request of the Premier, though not personally acquainted with his Excellency, proceed to Constantinople after Bairam.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 35.

Mr. Fane to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received September* 25.)

(No. 477.) *Therapia, September* 15, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit extract of a letter from an American missionary at Van, giving a description of the condition of things in Armenia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Extract from a Letter of a Missionary at Van.

Van, August 31, 1886.

THE majority of the men who have been in prison for participation in the quarrel in the Armenian church the 4th July have been released, no case having been made out against them. This after nearly two months' imprisonment. It is expected that the rest will be released after a time.

Bishop Ormanian has returned to Erzeroum, having been unable to effect a reconciliation among the Armenians. He seems to have been sincere in his endeavour, but the friends of Bishop Boghos would have nothing to do without him except to throw obstacles in his way, and revile him through the Armenian papers in Constantinople. Bishop Ruschnikliow, who has been appointed to this diocese, delays his

departure from Constantinople, so the Armenians are left without a spiritual chief. With the assistance of the Vali, a new Council has been appointed. It is composed of the leaders of both parties. The result of this experiment will be watched with no little interest, for it is the universal testimony that it is the personal ambition of these very men, their own self-seeking, and not the welfare of the community, which has been at the bottom of this long and unfortunate quarrel. If these men were to be wholly excluded from all participation in the affairs of the Government or the Armenian community it would be a blessing.

During the month of July an Armenian, who was in Sert with his family, telegraphed to Dr. Reynolds of this place with regard to the illness of his little child. A messenger, an Armenian, was at once dispatched with medicines and directions. A brief letter describing the case more fully was given to the man to bring back, but he was arrested in Sert; suspicion was aroused by his having a letter in English; he was sent under guard to Bitlis, imprisoned for eight or ten days, the letter taken from him, and he was finally set at liberty, but the letter was retained. Kurds, heavily armed, contrary to law, are allowed to roam at will in the same district, the Government raising no objections. Men known to be criminals are unmolested. Mousa Bey and his companions, who plundered and wounded M. Knapp and Reynolds three and a-half years ago, who have been identified in the Bitlis Court, and who are carrying about the stolen property, go about without molestation, and do not receive as severe punishment as the Armenian who was carrying an English letter describing the condition of a dying child. Until recently this same Mousa Bey has held the office of Mudir under the Bitlis Government. This is the way justice is dispensed (with) in some parts of the interior.

We have just had a visit from Mr. Athelstan Riley, who has come in behalf of a Committee over which the Archbishop of Canterbury presides, to locate two missionaries, Messrs. Maclean and Brown, among the Nestorians. Their object is to seek, through education, to reform the Church from within. They have no political mission, although the Turks and Russians have suspected it.

No. 36.

Mr. Fane to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received September* 25.)

(No. 484.) *Therapia, September* 16, 1886.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 462 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit a copy of a further despatch from Mr. Devey, reporting that the property looted has been restored by the Turkish authorities to the Russian Yezids.

Mr. Devey also calls attention to the laudable conduct of Kyazim Bey, the Governor of Bayazid.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 36.

Acting Consul Devey to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 24.) *Erzeroum, August* 30, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report, in continuation of my despatch No. 23, that complete restitution of all the looted property has been made to the Russian Yezids by the Turkish authorities, and that the Chief, Suleyi Ali, has been sent a prisoner to Bayazid. I further learn that the Jellali offered resistance to the Russian frontier cordon, but that the Cossacks, seeing the impossibility of coping with such large numbers, were compelled to remain impassive while the Kurds plundered.

I here venture again to draw your Excellency's attention to the very laudable conduct of Kyazim Bey, the Governor of Bayazid. This officer, an Albanian by birth, has held various Government posts for nearly thirty years, and at the time of the late war was a Superintendent of Police at Constantinople; for testimonials as to his high character, I need only refer your Excellency to Sir A. Sandison, and M. Onou, of the Russian Embassy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY,

Her Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul for Kurdistan.

No. 37.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received October 13.)

(No. 500.)
My Lord,

Therapia, October 5, 1886.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 371 of the 26th July, I have the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Barnham, stating that the Armenians implicated in the disturbances reported in that despatch have been released.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Sir E. Thornton.

Van, September 18, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report, with reference to my despatch No. 13 of the 8th July last, that the Armenians implicated in the disturbances of Sunday, the 4th July last, have been released from prison, no case having been proved against them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 38.

Mr. Nicolson to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 113.)
My Lord,

Tehran, September 22, 1886.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 108 of the 3rd September, I have the honour to state that the Turkish Ambassador informed me the other day that the Persian Government, not having been able to settle the Kurds who had migrated from Turkish territory, had succeeded in inducing them to return across the frontier. The repatriation had been effected quietly and without any disturbance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

No. 39.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received November 6.)

(No. 529.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, October 26, 1886.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of two despatches from Mr. Vice-Consul Barnham.

The former describes the oppression of the Armenians of Shadakh by Koords instigated by Mehemet and Ali Aghas, the murder of an Armenian at Tsitsantz, and the expulsion of Armenians from their villages by Koords.

The second forwards an extract from the Socialistic review, "La Tribune des Peuples," on the Armenian question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 39.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 19.)
Sir,

Van, October 1, 1886.

HAVING recently visited Shadakh, one of the cazas into which the Vilayet of Van is divided, I beg to forward to your Excellency a Report upon the condition of the Armenians in that district.

The caza in question represents a very limited area indeed, but the state of things

existing there may be regarded as a fair index of that prevailing throughout the province. When, a few years ago, the Armenian question occupied the immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government, the fullest details were furnished by the Consular staff of the oppressions practised by the Koords upon the Armenian peasantry, and although the Armenians certainly injured their cause by using language of exaggeration, and by aspiring to more than their national character entitled them, the broad fact remained that through the inveterate misgovernment of the Turkish authorities, they existed in a pitiable condition wherever they were located in proximity with the Koords. Since then nothing has been done to ameliorate their condition, and it is no exaggeration to say that they are to-day poorer and more neglected than they were five years ago.

In June an atrocious murder occurred at about three hours' distance from Shadakh. The sons of a certain Hadji Agha, a powerful Koord of the Ghideranli tribe, took forcible possession of the Armenian village of Tsitsantz, about four hours from Shadakh. The chief man of the village, named Mukhitar, proceeded to Shadakh and complained to the authorities. In revenge for this the unfortunate man was murdered near the village of Tsitsantz, and his body mutilated in the most horrible manner. The murderers severed the penis and placed it in his mouth, then ripped open the stomach, filled it with gunpowder, and ignited it. The suspected murderers are Moussa and Shakir, sons of the above-named Hadji Agha, and the sons of another Koord, named Takob Oghlou.

The ejected villagers, among whom was the widow of the murdered man, came into my tent at night and told me the tale. They were afraid to return home, and, I believe, are still hiding in Shatlakh. Other Armenians came to see me later on. They were a group of twelve men, and I incidentally learnt that all, with one exception, had lost their fathers by violent death at the hands of the Koords. No one has been punished for this crime at Tsitsantz. The complaint which the Armenians make is not that these crimes are frequent, but that they are never punished. The reason why has been well and often shown by Major Clayton, who, during the years 1880-81 made constant references in his Reports to the condition of the Armenians in Shadakh. For very many years past the Armenians have suffered from the direct persecution of two Koordish Aghas, Mehemet and Ali, both members of the Administrative Council of Shadakh, and from outrages committed by other Koordish families with the connivance of these Aghas. They levy black mail upon the unfortunate villagers, requiring from each house a sufficient supply of wheat, barley, butter, cheese, or whatever it may please them to exact, a system permitted by the Turkish authorities, not only in the villages, but even in the town of Shadakh itself. As a matter of course, they have also to pay the regulation taxes to the Government. Then, as in the case of Tsitsantz, the Koords make a raid upon helpless villages and drive the inhabitants away. Near the town of Shattakh five Armenian villages: Dzarnotz, Sak, Kasirik Mezraa, Sourp Kevork, and Sheikhantz have thus passed into the hands of the Koords. Major Clayton made representations to the Government of Van to have these Koordish Aghas banished. They have since been banished on three separate occasions, but a bribe paid to the officials here has always smoothed the way for their return. They are now in Shattakh, and it is evident that it is due to their influence in the Medjliss, and to that of the Cadi, that the murderers of Mukhitar have escaped from justice. The Cadi is corrupt and fanatical, and at enmity with the Kaimakam. The latter has shown an earnest desire to do justice in the matter, but under the existing régime all he could do was to arrest two of the persons implicated, whom the Cadi promptly set at liberty, though there was very little doubt as to their guilt. Moussa, one of the suspected murderers, is now on the staff of zaptiés in Shattakh. Since my return to Van I have received details of attacks by the followers of Mehemet, Ali, and Hadji Aghas upon the neighbouring villages of Kajet and Kakhli.

I hope some day an effectual remedy may be found for this state of things. A people so barbarous as the Koords cannot be ruled with advantage by the ordinary law which is applied throughout the Empire. That has been a painful failure in more tractable provinces than Van. Strong military law, vested in the hands of good officers, who should be empowered to arrest, judge, and punish all such crimes with death, would alone suffice to make the Koords treat the Armenians well.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 39.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 21.) *Van, October* 5, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to draw your Excellency's attention to the inclosed two leaves of a Socialistic monthly review, entitled "La Tribune des Peuples."

This review is published in Paris, and the number in question was sent through the post to some of the leading Armenians of Van.

The subject of the article is, of course, substantially correct, though treated extravagantly; but your Excellency will perceive that the language used is seditious, and that such a paper would be fatally compromising if found in the hands of any Armenian here by the present Vali.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 39.

Extract from "La Tribune des Peuples" of July and August, 1886.

APPEL À LA PRESSE: LA QUESTION ARMÉNIENNE.—Nous cherchons en vain à nous expliquer la cause de l'indifférence à peu près unanime que garde la presse quotidienne au sujet de la question Arménienne.

Les souffrances intolérables éprouvées par ce peuple que la Turquie, dans son affolement de despotisme, menace d'extermination, sont cependant de nature à éveiller les sympathies des amis de l'humanité dans tous les camps.

Les Chancelleries Européennes elles-mêmes, si peu accessibles d'ordinaire à la pitié, ont reconnu le bien-fondé des réclamations des Délégués de l'Arménie, et il existe, dans le Traité de Berlin, un Article LXI qui était destiné à mettre un terme aux attentats séculaires du Gouvernement Ottoman si les Protocoles des diplomates n'étaient pas un mensonge et une duperie lorsqu'il s'agit des faibles et des opprimés.

Prétendra-t-on que l'esprit profondément religieux des Arméniens n'est pas de nature à intéresser les peuples de l'Occident plus avancés qu'eux en civilisation?

Mais est-ce que les nègres, dont s'occupaient avec tant de sollicitude les philanthropes avant l'abolition de l'esclavage, n'étaient pas plongés dans la fange des superstitions les plus grossières?

Est-ce que les Hellènes, les Bulgares, les Serbes, les Monténégrins, les Polonais, les Irlandais, les Canadiens ne sont pas tous des Chrétiens fervents et pratiquants, chacun dans son genre?

Leur cause, pour ce motif, a-t-elle jamais chômé de défenseurs? Depuis quand s'informe-t-on des opinions religieuses, politiques, scientifiques, ou sociales des gens en détresse avant de leur porter secours?

Exige-t-on de l'homme qui se noie une profession de foi avant de lui tendre la main?

Quant à nous, notre rôle est tout tracé. Fidèles à la devise de Térence que "La Tribune des Peuples" a adoptée,* nous ne voulons voir dans les Arméniens que des victimes des plus monstrueux attentats dont l'histoire fasse mention; que des frères opprimés réclamant notre appui.

A ce titre, notre concours leur est acquis et nous ne leur marchanderons pas la parole.

Les Revendications des Arméniens.

"La Revue Française" vient de publier sous ce titre deux articles très remarquables, remplis de renseignements précieux et dus à la plume éloquente de M. Jean Broussali.

La question Arménienne y est traitée sous tous ses aspects avec une mesure et une sobriété qu'on ne s'attendrait pas à rencontrer de la part d'un Arménien.

Une cause n'est pas prêt de sombrer quand elle a, pour la servir, de pareils défenseurs.

L'auteur fait d'abord l'historique de l'Arménie; il raconte ses luttes et les souffrances qu'elle a endurées depuis qu'elle a eu le malheur de tomber sous la domination Ottomane.

* Rien de ce qui est humain ne nous sera étranger.

Les parties de l'Arménie qui ont échu, en partage, à la Perse et à la Russie, ont été relativement privilégiées; sans être à envier, leur sort est supportable, principalement en Russie.

Mais de toutes les nations, aucune n'a subi une destinée aussi affreuse que l'Arménie Ottomane.

Les Chartes de 1839 et de 1856 n'ont jamais été appliquées. La situation est la même qu'aux premiers jours de la conquête; il n'y a en présence que des vainqueurs et des vaincus.

Les promesses faites par le Traité de Berlin n'ont pas été tenues.

Toutes les protestations adressées aux Chancelleries Européennes sont restées à l'état de lettre morte.

L'Arménie n'a jamais abdiqué sa liberté ni cessé de revendiquer ses droits.

Ce pays situé sur les hauts plateaux qui dominent les bassins de l'Euphrate et du Tigre entre la Mer Caspienne et la Mer Noire, est la clef de l'Orient et le boulevard de l'Occident contre les invasions de barbares de l'Asie Centrale.

Les impôts perçus par la Porte seraient, à tout prendre, modérés s'ils n'étaient doublés et quelquefois triplés par les exactions des collecteurs et par les tributs supplémentaires exigés par des Gouverneurs avides.

Il n'y a aucun contrôle; tout est livré à la rapacité des agents du fisc et les Kurdes, qui sont de véritables brigands, viennent pas surcroît rançonner les habitants et commettre toutes sortes de méfaits.

Massacres dénis de justice, rapines des employés, oppression exercée par les fonctionnaires, faveurs pour les bourreaux, châtiments pour les victimes; tel est le tableau du régime Ottoman en Arménie.

Cette patience des administrés serait inexplicable si l'on ne savait que le Gouvernement Turc interdit expressément le port d'armes aux Arméniens au mépris des Capitulations.

Il ne faut pas croire que le peuple supporte sans regimber toutes ces atrocités.

Des tentatives d'indépendance eurent lieu, dans ces derniers temps, à diverses époques, notamment en 1855, 1860, 1878, 1882, et 1883.

Ceux qui prirent une part active aux derniers soulèvements gémissent encore dans les cachots.

L'ex-Grand Vizir Said Pacha montra toute la haine qui le possédait en déclarant qu'il supprimerait la question Arménienne, et que ce pays ne serait plus qu'une expression géographique.

"Ce programme s'exécute avec une méchanceté inouïe," dit M. Broussali; "on ferme nos écoles [on en a fermé jusqu'à 3,000], on détruit nos imprimeries; on arrête nos professeurs; on exile tout homme signalé comme instruit et capable; on emprisonne les étudiants.

"Je citerai M. Portoukalian, dont l'école de Van a été fermée et qui s'est réfugié jusqu'à Marseille: M. Megueriditch Terlémézian, Professeur de Géographie, qui a eu l'imprudence de faire une carte de la ville de Van, et qui a été arrêté aussitôt pour ce fait; M. Salug Effendi Keldjian, Avocat, qui avait osé intenter des poursuites contre certains Notables de la ville de Van, et qui a été immédiatement arrêté et conduit à Constantinople par ordre du Ministre de l'Intérieur."

De tout ce qui précède, il résulte que la situation de l'Arménie vis-à-vis de la Turquie a beaucoup d'analogie avec celle de l'Irlande et du Canada vis-à-vis de l'Angleterre, sauf cette différence, que l'oppression Anglaise est supportable jusqu'à un certain point tandis que la tyrannie Musulmane dépasse ce que l'imagination peut rêver et détruit jusqu'aux derniers vestiges de la civilisation.

L'homme de Constantinople est bien malade, comme l'insinuait, à la fin de son règne, l'Empereur Nicolas Ier de Russie; mais la rivalité de ses héritiers présomptifs sert à prolonger son agonie.

Chacun d'entre eux compte démembrer la Turquie à son profit et attend le moment psychologique pour faire concourir à ce but les nations opprimées; mais celles-ci se feraient d'étranges illusions si elles espéraient tirer quelque avantage d'un changement de maîtres.

C'est pourquoi nous pensons que l'Arménie, de même que les autres provinces vassales de la Turquie, ne peut attendre son salut que d'elle-même, et non d'une ingérence étrangère.

Est-ce à dire que, désorganisée comme elle l'est elle doive essayer d'en appeler à l'insurrection et de lutter à armes inégales contre ses oppresseurs?

Ce serait tout au plus une folie héroïque.

La science fournit aujourd'hui des moyens plus sûrs d'égaliser les chances. On

ne doit pas livrer les destinées de l'humanité ni même celles d'une nation aux hasards d'un coup de tête qui peut tout compromettre.

Que tous les Arméniens qui ont autant d'amour pour la liberté que d'horreur pour la servitude s'entendent par petits groupes sur ce qu'il convient de faire, et quand chacun sentira qu'il peut compter sur son voisin comme sur lui-même l'étincelle électrique jaillira du contact des volontés et déterminera l'explosion qui renversera tous les obstacles.

La liberté ne s'obtient pas par des intermédiaires ni par des supplications; elle se conquiert par la violence et les violents seuls s'en emparent suivant une parole de l'Évangile.

Les Colonies Arméniennes du Midi de la France, qui comptent tant d'esprits éclairés dans leur sein, à Montpellier et à Marseille, sont en état de nous comprendre.

Nous n'avons pas de conseils à leur donner ni à leur dicter une ligne de conduite, mais ils n'ignorent pas que si une population de 6,000,000 d'habitants, ayant les mêmes mœurs et parlant la même langue, supporte le joug abhorré des Turcs, c'est que ces millions d'habitants sont avant tout asservis à l'influence religieuse.

Les chefs spirituels de toutes les religions recommandent à leurs ouailles la patience, la résignation, et répètent sur tous les tons après Saint-Paul: "Soyez soumis aux tyrans!"

Les despotes eux-mêmes n'hésitent pas à recourir aux moyens révolutionnaires lorsqu'il ne leur reste plus que cette voie de salut pour maintenir leurs prérogatives; c'est l'*a b c* du métier.

Les Arméniens, en maintes circonstances, ont donnée des preuves de courage et de patriotisme. Qu'ils sachent maintenant se tenir à la hauteur des circonstances en prenant l'initiative des mesures que comporte la situation.

La Rédaction.

No. 40.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received November* 6.)

(No. 530.) *Constantinople, October* 26, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Longworth, giving a review of the state of affairs in the Vilayet of Trebizond as far as public security is concerned.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Consul Longworth to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 23.) *Trebizond, October* 7, 1886.

Sir,

SINCE my appointment to this post I have caused to be recorded in a memorandum book such matters of public interest as affect more or less the Vilayets of Trebizond and Sivas. These notes enable me from time to time to review the state of affairs in these parts, which I beg now here to do so far as public security is concerned.

That degree of safety so prevalent in Aziz Pasha's time has not yet been attained under the present Vali's administration.

Acts of burglary and brigandage in the Trebizond Vilayet are still of too frequent occurrence to inspire a sense of perfect security, and hence, among the evil consequences of a population armed indoors as well as out of doors, number cases of broils and feuds, some of which are of deplorable nature.

The following three cases of assassination have come to my knowledge as perpetrated during last quarter.

The first, a Greek murdered by robbers while his house was being pillaged in Santa, near Gumushané; the second, a corporal killed by Turks near Kerassond; and the third, a Greek villager murdered by Mussulmans outside Gumushané. None of the authors of these crimes have as yet been arrested, nor are likely to be, unless a thorough change is effected in the pursuit of criminals and the administration of justice.

The loss among the brigands has, as usual, been very insignificant.

Two were killed during the quarter, one by travellers in an encounter on the Erzeroum road, in which several were wonded on both sides, and another in a fight with gendarmes near Thermeh.

Those captured are five in number, one in the Tokat district, and a band of four in that of Samsoun, which make up together a riddance of seven robbers, out of more than a hundred infesting the country.

Of all the bands that of the notorious brigand Chief Mindjan Oglou and his four companions appears the very worst.

The districts of Kerassond and Karahissar are simply being devastated by these robbers, who carry on their nefarious practices with such impunity and unparalleled audacity, that the complicity of Government officials can scarcely be doubted. The amount of suffering caused by this gang within the last few weeks may be described as follows:—They kidnaped a Greek merchant and ransomed him for 1,500*l.*; they made a list of all the well-to-do inhabitants and, under threats of incendiarism and assassination, demanded the amounts affixed to their names; they appropriated with others the crops of the terror-stricken villagers, who, abandoning their fields, fled for refuge to Kerassond, and, in short, they carried on a series of excesses to that extent that the poor people in their despair wired an appeal for protection to the Sultan himself. The serious attention of the Vali was thus drawn to the necessity of exterminating Mindjan Oglou's band. How this was to be done became a question of a rather troublesome nature. The attempt to form a local guard, paid by the people, failed by the brigands threatening to victimize the families of such men; the same reasons seem to have induced the usually brave followers of Ahmet Agha, of Tripoli, to decline the task, and thus, as a last resource, a reinforcement of twenty-five gendarmes, in addition to those from Karahissar, were dispatched from here to Kerassond, specially charged with the pursuit of this band. The expediency of this final measure is, however, very questionable, for Lieutenant Bekir Boy, in command of the detachment, has been seen to issue alone out of Mindjan Oglou's house, a suspicious circumstance which brought on him the charge of connivance with the outlaws, from which he has somehow or other justified himself to the satisfaction of the Vali of Trebizond.

The laxity, corruption, and demoralizing fear among the authorities in general, appear on the whole to be the mainspring of this deplorable state of insecurity.

Even if the Governors themselves were honest, they could scarcely cope with the evil influences brought to bear on their administration, and hence their very helplessness tends to encourage lawlessness throughout their districts. As a consequence, a radical change is wanting in the shape of reforms, which can only come from Constantinople.

In conclusion, it is with relief I beg to report that such misdeeds of Laz emigrants as described in my despatch No. 12 of the 15th June have almost entirely ceased, a fact which is attributable to the retention of Tchuruk Souli Ali Pasha at Constantinople as Aide-de-camp to the Sultan, and the recipient of great favours at the hands of his Sovereign (*vide* despatch No. 13 of the 28th June).

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH

No. 41.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received November* 13.)

(No. 554.) *Constantinople, November* 8, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward copies of two despatches, and a telegram, received from Consul Henderson, giving an account of the early proceedings of the Imperial Commissioner recently dispatched to Aleppo to make inquiries into the conduct of the Governor-General at that place.

With a view to forestall any decision to which the Ottoman Special Commissioner might arrive at Aleppo, and to make it incumbent upon him to go into the Demerkarim and other British cases, I have addressed a *note verbale* to the Sublime Porte, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, expressing the hope that the grievances and complaints of British subjects at Aleppo may be included in the inquiries now being made by the Imperial Delegate.

I have also written to Mr. Henderson, authorizing him to bring to the notice

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of the Commissioner such grievances of British subjects as in his discretion he may think fit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 41.

Consul Henderson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 26.) *Aleppo, September* 30, 1886.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that Saïb Bey arrived at Aleppo on the 21st instant. A great reception had been prepared for him by the Vali, but when he heard of the preparations at the last station before reaching Aleppo, he insisted on continuing his journey during the night, and quietly entered the town unexpectedly at midnight. He has now been here ten days, and as yet has done nothing but receive Petitions against the Vali. I believe over 200 Petitions have been presented to him.

The Vali has remained in his private house indisposed, and it is only now he realizes his unpopularity, that he has been deserted entirely by his former associates, and that the whole population, without exception, is inimical to him. The French Consul, his anamnensis Dougez, and a German clerk alone remain faithful to the Vali, all his other so-called friends having bitterly denounced him to Saïb Bey.

On Friday a somewhat sensational incident occurred. A poor man, from whom Djemil Pasha had forcibly taken 500*l.*, presented a Petition to Saïb Bey during prayers in the Great Mosque before some 3,000 people, begging Saïb Bey to give him redress. Saïb Bey accepted the Petition, and promised that justice should be done him. All the people who were in prison on the simple order of Djemil Pasha have been released.

I shall not fail to keep your Excellency informed of anything of note which may take place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 41.

Consul Henderson to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 28.) *Aleppo, October* 12, 1886.

Sir,

I HAD the honour in a previous despatch to inform your Excellency of the arrival here of Saïb Bey, the Special Commissioner, and I have now the honour to report that since his arrival he has, till within the last few days, maintained an attitude of great reserve, confining himself to the reception of Petitions against the Governor-General, of which he has received a large number.

It may be within your Excellency's recollection that the Vali exiled a certain Mustafa Effendi, the Under-Secretary of the Correspondence Department, under circumstances of some severity, without even alleging a pretext for the step. The Commissioner asked the Vali his reasons for so doing, and was told he knew nothing of the matter except that Mustafa Effendi had gone to Aintab to pay a visit to his family. Saïb Bey told the Vali to telegraph to the authorities at Aintab to release him, which the Vali said he would at once do, and Saïb Bey telegraphed to Mustafa Effendi to return to Aleppo. The latter showed the telegram to the Kaïmakam of Aintab, who said he had no orders in that sense from Djemil Pasha. Mustafa Effendi succeeded in effecting his escape, and on his arrival at Aleppo related the matter to Saïb Bey, who was exceedingly angry with the Vali, and it is said has procured from the telegraph office a copy of a telegram from the Vali ordering the authorities at Aintab not to release Mustafa Effendi.

The ex-Procureur-Général has formulated an impeachment against the Vali consisting of sixty-six accusations, which he is ready to substantiate with documentary evidence. The Bakour family claim 28,000*l.* and redress for eighteen outrages perpetrated on them and their property, and it now appears that Antaki was put in prison and his property sequestered on Djemil Pasha's written order.

A sequester has been placed on the Vali's property, and he has been deserted by

all his former friends except the French Consul. His Excellency admits his position here to be untenable in face of the universal feeling of discontent and hostility evinced towards him. He would only be too glad to leave Aleppo quietly if this inquiry were quashed, as he foresees it must result in his dismissal, if not his punishment and degradation.

A new Procureur-Général came here with Saïb Bey, and the Vali has already threatened to exile this official, in consequence of his liberating eighteen persons who were found in prison without any accusation ever having been preferred against them, and without any decree or order of the Tribunals.

They were in prison on the simple order of the Vali. The Procureur-Général so informed the Porte by telegram on Saturday last, adding that as long as Djemil Pasha remained here neither he nor any of the Tribunals could properly perform their judicial functions.

In my despatch No. 4 of the 31st January, 1885, I reported a conflict which had taken place between the Vali and the Italian Consulate with reference to a certain Sagiati, whom Djemil Pasha protected with an armed force against the execution of a decree of the Italian Court of Appeal.

This man now demands, through Saïb Bey, the repayment by Djemil Pasha of a sum of 500*l.* which his Excellency made him pay as the price of the protection then extended to him. This is only one of many similar demands presented to Saïb Bey, who, within the last few days, has expressed his disapproval of the Vali's conduct and his sympathy with his Excellency's victims. In one notable instance, where a well-educated and respectable Mussulman had been shockingly ill-treated by the Vali, Saïb Bey wept like a child at the narration of his sufferings.

It is not, of course, known what Saïb Bey's instructions or powers are, but his presence here has undoubtedly produced an excellent effect. He has put an end to the reign of terror which has existed for the last three or four years, and will do much to dispel the unhappy feeling which His Majesty's support of Djemil Pasha unquestionably caused.

Saïb Bey is well spoken of by every one; he is affable and courteous, and, what is more important, enjoys the reputation of being honest and conscientious. Unless his instructions are to disculpate the Vali on account of political considerations, or in deference to the position of his father, there can be no doubt what the result of the inquiry will be. It is said that he has already asked for the Vali's suspension or dismissal; but this is only rumour, the truth of which I cannot, of course, vouch for.

Some years ago I informed Lord Dufferin, in a private letter, of the support the French Consulate was giving to Djemil Pasha's idea of obtaining the fusion of the Vilayets of Damascus and Aleppo into one Government, and his Excellency's appointment as Governor-General of this embryo Viceroyalty.

I never gave the matter much serious consideration, as the proposition was one which I felt sure the Porte would never entertain. Since Saïb Bey's arrival he has made many inquiries about this matter. There is much speculation on the subject, and I hear that some papers of a compromising nature have been discovered; but probably the fact of Djemil Pasha's having lately remitted the greater part of his enormous fortune to Paris through the French Consulate may have excited suspicion against him.

I do not attach any importance to the matter; at the same time it must not be forgotten that Djemil Pasha calls himself "l'enfant gâté" of the French Embassy, and that whatever sympathies he may have are French. When Sir Henry Layard obtained his exile to Yemen for his misconduct during the last Russian war, it was M. Fournier's personal intercession with the Sultan that saved him, and it was M. de Jorey who shielded him from the consequences of his misbehaviour to Sir Henry during the latter's visit to Damascus in 1879.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

P.S.—A significant indication of the change which has taken place is the refusal of the Bishops to sign a "mazbata" in the Pasha's favour, though his Excellency himself went in person to solicit it. He was told by the Syrian Patriarch that he (the Pasha) had already obliged the clergy to sign too many false "mazbatas," and that he would report to Rome any Bishop who did so in future.

P. H.

F.O. 424
PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Inclosure 3 in No. 41.

Consul Henderson to Sir E. Thornton.

Aleppo, October 16, 1886.

(Telegraphic.)

SAIB BEY has rented a house for twelve months, and I cannot say how long he may remain here. He has been here a month, and has done little or nothing as yet. All the many Petitions ask him to suspend Vali, otherwise he cannot properly fulfil his mission, and I understand that he is in communication with Grand Vizier on this subject. He has expressed an opinion unfavourable to Vali to several Mussulman Notables.

Inclosure 4 in No. 41.

Note Verbale.

HER Majesty's Embassy learnt with considerable satisfaction some time ago that the Sublime Porte had taken in hand the subject of the numerous complaints against the Vali of Aleppo by sending a Special Commissioner for inquiring carefully into their nature and correctness.

The Sublime Porte is no doubt aware that this Embassy has been under the necessity of bringing to the notice of the Sublime Porte on repeated occasions grievances and complaints of British subjects at Aleppo; it therefore entertains the hope that these will be included in the inquiries now prosecuted in that vilayet by the Imperial Commissioner.

Constantinople, November 4, 1886.

No. 42.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received November 13.)

(No. 556. Confidential.)

Constantinople, November 9, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting the serious increase lately of disorder in that vilayet, and the disgraceful proceedings of the police and gendarmerie officers.

Mr. Barnham also reports a growing hostility on the part of Mussulmans towards Armenian Christians, and points out that it has been provoked by the proceedings of the Vali, and incloses copy of a note which he has addressed to his Excellency calling his serious attention to some of the outrages.

I have also instructed Sir Alfred Sandison to bring these reprehensible proceedings and the shortcomings of the local authorities to the notice of the Sublime Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 42.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Sir E. Thornton.

(No. 22. Confidential.)

Van, October 17, 1886.

Sir,

I BEG very earnestly to call your Excellency's attention to the increase of disorder in this vilayet during the past few weeks, and to the attitude of the Local Government with respect to it.

Day after day authentic reports reach me of outrages committed by the Kurds, who make organized attacks upon the Armenian villagers, burning their hay-stacks, and carrying off grain and flocks. In the next place, I have to report to you the shameless licence with which the troops located in the city of Van are allowed to plunder the orchards and vineyards in and near the city, and with what impunity they are permitted to rob and ill-treat the villagers on the road from Van to Bashkala, between which two places troops are constantly passing to and fro. Lastly, and to

this I beg to draw your Excellency's special attention, I have to report to you certain disgraceful proceedings of police and gendarmerie officers within the city and in the neighbouring villages.

With regard to cattle-lifting by the Kurds, it is fair to say that, in some instances, the Kaïmakams recover part or the whole of the missing property, but, in some cases, they appropriate part of the animals recovered to their own use, in which case the justice offered is certainly more offensive than the original crime. With regard to the proceedings of the Kurds, I have a long list of outrages of this class, but it must be taken for granted that the Kurds are never quiet during the summer months, that it is their constant habit to prey upon the Armenians, and it would be idle for me to detail each incident of the kind, especially as there seems so little hope of any drastic remedy being applied.

The cases of misconduct among the troops, which I am about to relate, should have been promptly and severely punished, but the military authorities have done nothing in the matter. I am unwilling to say anything to the discredit of his Excellency Munir Pasha, the Commander of the troops here. Personally, he is an excellent man, honest, and universally liked for his amiable qualities, but he is not intelligent, and utterly wanting in the decision of character essential to his command.

Four hours from Van on the Bashkala road is an Armenian village called Norkegh. It has for a long time been frequented by the troops, and the inhabitants have hitherto raised their voices in vain against the persecution to which they are subjected at their hands. The soldiers fare sumptuously. The villagers tremblingly bring them eggs, milk, cheese, and all that an ordinary traveller would wish, but they repay them with curses and blows, say they want meat, and compel them to kill their sheep. All this is given without pay. They do not even go through the form of giving a receipt which would entitle the villagers to repayment from the regimental pay office. It is to be remembered also that these Armenian villagers have wives and children who are turned out of doors to accommodate them. In the morning the soldiers compel the villagers to lend them animals as far as Khoshab, five hours distant, and to accompany them on foot to show the road, and carry their luggage. As the Khoshab road runs parallel with the telegraph line, this is, of course, wanton and unnecessary. The felt carpets which the villagers give them to sleep upon they sometimes carry away with them, or cut them up to make themselves sandals for the journey. They send back from Khoshab the animals impressed, retaining for their own use the horse-cloths which covered them. On the 14th September eighteen soldiers entered Norkegh, and, after feasting on the best, proceeded to ill-treat the villagers, with the result that one man, named Ohan Oghlou Agot, had a rib broken by a stone and other injuries, Manoug Oghlou Simon had his nose broken, and Agem Oglilou Marderos had his head split open. On the morning of the 20th September two soldiers passed through Norkegh, took two oxen from a man named Sepho, and forced him to go as far as Zernak (two hours). They then took his boots away and left him. About the same date eight soldiers arrived from Van, dined, slept, and in the morning took each a donkey, which they sent back from Khoshab without their covering-cloths. On the 25th September a soldier arrived from Gevver, proceeding to Van with two loads of smuggled tobacco, fared handsomely, paid nothing, abused and beat the villagers.

On the 28th September some soldiers passing through on their way to Bashkala stole $2\frac{1}{2}$ okes of butter from the villagers and ill-treated them. In every village there is one man called the Khyzer, whose duty it is to wait upon travellers. The Khyzer of Norkegh has been handled so roughly that he has fled with his family. This makes the sixth family which has been compelled to quit the village. About a fortnight ago several of the villagers came to the city and presented a Petition to the Commander Pasha, who not only refused to listen to them, but put two of their number in prison. They afterwards came to me and to the Russian Vice-Consul. To make sure that their statements were not exaggerated, we next day sent our Dragomans to the village to make inquiries. Everything was fully confirmed. The man Agot, who had a rib broken on the 14th September, lies at the village badly hurt, and unable to bear removal to the city for treatment. We now sent the Dragoman to Munir Pasha, begging him to set the two villagers at liberty, and to punish the soldiers who had taken the chief part in the affair of the 14th September. We suggested that an officer should be appointed to remain at the village permanently for the purpose of preserving order; that, in future, provision should be made that the villagers be paid for all food supplied by obtaining receipts from the soldiers, by virtue of which a reduction might be made in the collection of the taxes corresponding with the amount of expense incurred.

Lastly, we begged the Pasha to consider if it were not feasible to erect a khan near the village, and thus settle the question once for all. The Pasha thanked us for our suggestions, and promised that he would do everything desired, but at the present moment the two villagers remain in prison, and I have not the slightest belief that any one of the Pasha's promises will be performed.

Half-an-hour from Van are some beautiful vineyards, named the Shark Baghlar. The troops plunder the grapes, and on one occasion broke the head of an Armenian guardian ("bekrchi"). There are at present about 3,000 troops in Van, an unusually large number, and perhaps want of accommodation renders their control more difficult.

Last Saturday some sensation was caused by the abduction of an Armenian girl in Van by a non-commissioned officer (Buluk Emini). The authorities defended the act, saying that the girl was a consenting party, and had become a convert to Islam; but the Acting Armenian Archmort acted energetically in the matter, and regained possession of the girl two days ago.

I now pass to the proceedings of the police and gendarmerie officers. A number of bad characters, among whom was a notorious person named Dervisch Chaoush, son of Tatar Agha, of the village of Schemiran Alti, carried off two Turkish women of low character, with whom they proceeded to wander about among the hills near Van. Another band of roughs, headed by a certain Kara Chaoush Oghlou Mustapha, went off to the hills with the intention of attacking the first party and recovering the women. They met, and Kara Chaoush Oghlou Mustapha was killed, and, as generally believed, by Dervisch Chaoush.

A young Armenian named Tchiragian Georgi, also a questionable character, and an associate of the murdered man, was on Saturday, the 25th September, attacked by unknown hands while proceeding to the monastery of Holy Cross ("Sourp Khatch"), gagged, stripped naked, beaten, and left helpless on the road. He afterwards recovered and made his way back to Van, stopping at the village of Kooroo-Bash on the road to beg the loan of some clothes. Next morning the people in his quarter told him that the police were after him for the murder of Kara Chaoush Oghlou Mustapha, because his clothes had been found beside the murdered man. Rashid Agha, of the police force, and two gendarmes, of whom one was Yuzbashi Osman Agha, now entered the Armenian's house, and found him hiding in a hay-rick, whereupon they began to beat him fearfully and tied his hands. When they brought him out into the street, a crowd having collected, Rashid Agha turned to the Armenian bystanders and cursed their religion, saying, "Wait, you Giaours! Lately you have become a set of rebels, and now you have killed a Mussulman. Look you, I will collect all the Mussulmans in my quarter and attack you, will plunder your houses, violate your wives, carry off your children, and massacre you all!"

The Armenian was now dragged through the streets, beaten and kicked like a dog, until, on his arrival at the city, without the preliminary examination required by law taking place, he was loaded with chains and thrown into prison.

I report the affair in detail, not so much because I doubt the guilt of the Armenian, as on account of the dangerous language used by the police officer, and the cruelty with which he effected the arrest. This took place at Arak, a garden quarter not far from the Vice-Consulate.

A Greek chemist named Triantaphillidi told the Quarantine Doctor a few days ago that he had heard the Municipal Doctor, Hassan Effendi, a fanatic, ignorant Mussulman, exclaim in the Pharmacy that he believed the day would soon come when the Porte would allow the Mussulmans to massacre the Christians. The Greek is afraid to repeat his statement, but I have no doubt of its truth.

Another police officer, an Armenian, named Avidis Batavian, a servile creature of the Vali, frequently parades the streets of Van in a state of intoxication, and ill-treats the people.

On the 29th September Captain Mustafa Agha and Lieutenant Ibrahim Bey, of the gendarmerie, were sent as tax-gatherers to the village of Kirtsch. One poor man, having no money, was immediately arrested and brought before them. They beat him, threw him down, and kicked him, then poured cold water upon him, and kicked him again, until the poor fellow had very little life left in him. Then, while many people were looking on, Ibrahim Bey made water upon his face. This scene is described by a man named Kabuzian, who was present.

I inclose translation of a letter which I have sent to the Vali of Van, drawing his attention to the events described (excepting those relating to the conduct of the military), as well as to the murder at Shattack, reported in my despatch No. 19 of the

1st instant, and pointing out that, as in the above cases, the most regrettable occurrences are the unbridled conduct of the police and gendarmerie, the agents of public order, from whom so much has been hoped and promised.

The Russian Vice-Consul addressed a similar letter to the authorities, and will probably report to his Embassy upon the subject. I trust that my letter to the Vali will meet with your Excellency's approval. I have endeavoured to use a conciliatory tone in treating of the various events, and not as claiming a right to interfere with or dictate to the authorities in matters of local administration.

It is of vital importance that harmony should be promoted between the Mussulman and Christian races in Van. This should be the one great object for which the Vali of Van should strive, but it is beyond dispute that the present Vali is the immediate cause of the open hostility which the Mussulman race has for some time shown towards the Christians. An old man, of fixed and narrow views, absurdly convinced of his own wisdom, ignorant and fanatical, he was appointed to this vilayet at a time when the proceedings of the Armenians in Van had, with justice, excited distrust at Constantinople. The Russian Vice-Consul at that time, Major Kamsaragan, being an Armenian by birth, and the representative of one of their oldest families, became an idol among the Armenian population, while his natural vanity led him to court popularity by lavish hospitality, and his house became, in time, the resort of all those young Armenians whose minds had become unsettled by the talk of autonomy which prevailed in certain quarters at that time. Hamed Pasha, the present Vali, exiled those people, and created the present police force, whose officers were taught that their chief duty consisted in watching the movements of the principal Armenians, of all Europeans, and especially of the Russian Vice-Consul. Major Kamsaragan's personal vanity and mediocre intelligence blinded him as to the true feelings of the Armenians, leading him to give a false colour to his Reports, in that he represented to his Government at one time that a large majority of the people solicited admission to the Orthodox Church, and, at another, that they would all welcome a Russian occupation. The Russian Government, however, perceived the truth, and replaced him. The policy which he provoked is now directed against his successor, and scarcely an Armenian of consideration in Van dare enter his doors. In a less degree the same policy applies to myself, for the Vali indirectly discourages any signs of goodwill by either Mussulmans or Christians towards me.

The Vali, no doubt, considers this high policy, but the ordinary Mussulman people are simple-minded folk, who have no idea of policy, and interpret the conduct of the Vali as meaning that the foreign Consuls are powerless and discredited. If so, they very naturally think they may assert themselves against their Christian fellow-subjects without fear of punishment. The language which I have reported to your Excellency is the outcome of this feeling, which will lead to deplorable results if unchecked. It is indispensable that the harassing policy of the Vali should cease. The disloyal element has been removed from Van, and, with good government, I believe the people will prove good citizens. They need to be treated with tact. A little kindness and confidence on the part of the authorities would work wonders. But the present Vali will not do this, and, in the interests of good order, it would be well if he were replaced by a younger, wiser, and more liberal-minded Governor.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 43.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir W. White.

(No. 360.) *Foreign Office, November 22, 1886.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 554 of the 8th instant, relative to the inquiry now being made by Saib Bey into the conduct of the Governor-General of Aleppo. I have to convey to you my approval of the steps which you have taken in order that the grievances and complaints of British subjects at Aleppo shall be included in the inquiry.

I am, &c.

(Signed) IDDESLEIGH.

No. 14.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir W. White.

(No. 361.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 22, 1886.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 556, Confidential, of the 9th instant, transmitting copy of a despatch from Vice-Consul Barnham, in which he reports an increase of disorder in the Vilayet of Van, and calls attention to the misconduct of the Turkish troops, and of the police and gendarmerie.

Your Excellency's action in bringing this state of things to the notice of the Porte is approved.

I am, &c.
(Signed) IDDESLEIGH.

No. 15.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received November 24.)

(No. 562. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November 12, 1886.*

ON the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 287 of the 20th September, transmitting a copy of a Memorandum from certain inhabitants of the Lebanon drawing attention to alleged violations of the Organic Statute of the province and complaining of the conduct of Wassa Pasha and Kupelyan Effendi, Sir E. Thornton called upon Mr. Eyres for his observations on the Memorandum.

I have now the honour to transmit a full Report which I have received from Mr. Eyres on the questions mentioned in the Memorandum inclosed in your Lordship's despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Mr. Eyres to Mr. Finn.

(No. 51. Confidential.)

Sir, *Beyrout, October 26, 1886.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador, dated the 28th September, in which I am directed to furnish observations on a Memorandum addressed to Her Majesty's Government by certain inhabitants of the Lebanon.

In the first place, I think it right to state that the tone of the Memorandum is such as to raise a suspicion that it emanates solely from Maronite sources, as, except in one instance, to be hereinafter mentioned, the complaints which form the subject of the Memorandum would scarcely be indorsed by any of the other communities of the Lebanon.

I now proceed to comment on the contents paragraph by paragraph.

With regard to the statement that the Representatives of the Great Powers remain deaf to the complaints which are continually addressed to them by the suffering population, I venture to call your attention to Mr. Eldridge's despatches on the government of the Lebanon, and especially to despatches No. 2 of the 10th January, 1884, No. 13 of the 20th March, 1885, and No. 28 of the 16th April, 1886, in which he states that, though Wassa Pasha's Government is not so strong or so popular as that of Rustem Pasha, still tranquillity and contentment reign throughout the district; and that no complaints have reached him with regard to the administration of justice, though he mentions certain abuses which have come under his notice. For my own part, I can assert that during the period I have been acting as Her Majesty's Consul-General no one has addressed to me, directly or indirectly, any complaint whatsoever, though my eyes have not been shut to the continuance of the corruption mentioned in the despatches quoted above.

The alleged violation of the judicial organization prescribed by the "Règlement du Liban" consists of certain changes which were reported to Her Majesty's Ambassador in Mr. Eldridge's despatch No. 2 of the 10th January, 1884.

The Tribunals of the cazas were, according to the "Règlement du Liban," presided over by a Cadi chosen from the community numerically strongest in the caza, assisted by a Naib chosen from the next most important community, who acted in the absence of the Cadi. Wassa Pasha substituted for this Court a Court of First Instance, consisting of a President and two members, elected from the larger and smaller communities respectively, cases being decided by a majority of members. At the same time, these district Tribunals were granted powers to decide without appeal all cases in which the sum in dispute amounted to less than 1,000 piastres, while their judgement was final in the case of misdemeanours and contraventions.

This reform, though not quite in accordance with the letter of the "Règlement," was not, as Mr. Eldridge says, a violation of the spirit in which it was framed, and it certainly is eminently just. But it has aroused considerable opposition among the Maronites, whose influence was previously supreme in four out of the seven cazas of the Lebanon, while they now find themselves considerably hampered by the members belonging to other communities. And they are justified in objecting to it in so far that Wassa Pasha's method of proceeding was distinctly high-handed. He initiated these changes without previously obtaining the consent of the Porte and of the Great Powers. The Porte, though it was credited at first with having ordered the Governor-General to revert to the old system, has left the matter in abeyance, and I understand that Wassa Pasha has received no reply to repeated letters asking for its sanction. Time, however, has shown that the working of the Courts as at present constituted is not quite satisfactory, inasmuch as the personnel is not sufficient. One of the members of the Court acts as "Juge d'Instruction," and afterwards sits as Judge in cases which he has previously examined and reported on. But this defect would be easily removed by the appointment of the necessary officials, whose salaries need not entail much extra expenditure.

In addition to the above-mentioned change, Wassa Pasha reduced the Superior Judicial Medjliss of the Lebanon from twelve members to six. Formerly, the Medjliss consisted of two members of each community, viz., Maronite, Druse, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Moslem and Metuali, and was divided into two Courts by Rustem Pasha: one for civil and the other for criminal cases. Wassa Pasha from motives of economy reduced the number of members, and it now sits on alternate days as a Civil and Criminal Court. This method leads to great confusion and delay. The business of the Court is terribly in arrear, and much dissatisfaction is the result.

The Governor-General is perfectly aware of the state of affairs, and it is understood that he is now pressing the Sublime Porte to reply to his request for sanction in order to obtain a refusal, in which case he would revert to the old system. But whereas Rustem Pasha's division of the Medjliss into two Courts was infinitely superior to the present system, so also is the enlargement of the judicial bench in the Caza Courts as distinctly an improvement on the former arrangement; and it would be a matter for deep regret if the one reform which has proved most advantageous should be abolished in connection with, and on account of, the failure of the other.

With regard to the allegation contained in the Memorandum that the changes introduced by Wassa Pasha have had the effect of subjecting the Courts and Magistrates to the influence of Kupelyan Effendi, I can only say that on the face of it, it is absurd and is absolutely without foundation. Kupelyan Effendi would have neither more nor less influence whether the old or new system obtained.

I fear that the accusation of corruption brought against Kupelyan Effendi is but too well founded. Mr. Eldridge, in his despatch No. 28 of the 16th April, 1886, reported to the effect that corruption was rampant in the Administration, and daily matters go from bad to worse. Posts are openly bought and sold, and without money it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a sentence in the Courts. Wassa Pasha was at one time credited with having nothing to do with these evil practices, though from weakness he permitted them to extend. But from information I have lately received it is clear to my mind that he can no longer be considered innocent of sharing in these ill-gotten gains, and it is openly asserted that Kupelyan Effendi acts as his broker. Family scandals have caused a rupture in the relations between Wassa Pasha and his son-in-law, who is truly called his evil genius, and Kupelyan Effendi, though holding his official position, has lost of late much of his power; but he still exacts tribute from all who require anything at the hands of the Lebanon Government.

The dispute concerning the construction of roads is of old standing. The road principally referred to in the Memorandum is that which has been lately commenced from Beyrout to Tripoli. Other roads have been constructed in the Lebanon both by Rustom and Wassa Pashas, but it would be difficult for malice itself to find any

objections to them on the score of utility and expense. It might fairly be objected that long carriage roads are not required for the interior of the Lebanon, and that good mule tracks would be as useful and much less expensive, but hitherto, with the one exception of the road to Beit Eddin, the summer residence of the Governor-General, no carriage roads have been built in the interior.

I hardly think it necessary to trouble you, Sir, with a whole history of the controversy concerning the Tripoli road, which Mr. Eldridge explained at length in his despatch No. 38, Confidential, of the 2nd December, 1884. It will be sufficient to say that, owing to the opposition of the Maronites, urged on by the French Consul, the agreement which existed between the Governor-General of Syria and the Governor-General of the Lebanon with regard to the construction of a road from Tripoli through Beyrout to Sidon, a work of the greatest public utility, was broken up. The Lebanon Government has now undertaken the construction of the road from Tripoli to Beyrout alone and unassisted, and the Maronites still display the same incomprehensible antipathy to this most useful undertaking. The implication in the Memorandum that the Turkish Government wishes to see the road constructed, as being of importance from a military point of view (an assertion which emanated originally from the French Consulate), could only have been put forward by persons who were much in want of pretexts to support an insensate opposition.

In Mr. Eldridge's despatch No. 13 of the 20th March, 1885, he describes the interference of the French Consul in the elections of the Administrative Council of the Lebanon. On that occasion Wassa Pasha, considering that the French Consul was most unwarrantably interfering in matters that no way concerned him, did, I understand, openly put forth all his influence to prevent the return of the French candidates, and succeeded in his endeavour. I am not aware, however, that he did anything further than use legitimate influence, nor did he contravene the spirit of the "Règlement." Rustem Pasha on a similar occasion exerted himself to obtain the return of certain candidates whom he considered well fitted for the position they were to hold, but as he did not openly place himself in opposition to French influence, and acted with great discretion, no objections were made to his proceedings. It would have been well, perhaps, had Wassa Pasha followed in his footsteps.

The final complaint contained in the Memorandum, to the effect that there are several examples of persons who have been bankrupt sitting on the judicial bench is, in my humble judgment, unworthy of a moment's consideration.

It is, I believe, true that a Druse member of one of the Caza Courts was at one time a bankrupt, but I understand that he is an excellent member of the Court, and no less honest than his colleagues. If perfect integrity and honesty in money matters were considered indispensable in those who are candidates for judicial posts, I fear that the number of persons so qualified would be reduced *ad infinitum*.

In conclusion, I have the honour to add that, though Wassa Pasha is in the main a kindly, well-intentioned man, he is neither a strong nor an intelligent Governor. Wassa Pasha's conduct as a rule, apart from the question of corruption, betrays a lack of dignity which contrasts painfully with that of Rustem Pasha, and now that it is clear that he not only permits, but is implicated in, corrupt practices, his government has fallen into contempt. During a long period of good government the people have acquired habits of orderliness which the weakness of Wassa Pasha's rule has not hitherto broken down; but there are many signs that a continuation of the present system will react most unfavourably on the well-being of the Lebanon. If his Excellency were surrounded by capable and honest men, there would be some hopes that affairs would right themselves, but, unfortunately, the Pasha's *entourage* is composed of men for whom honour has no meaning. The one good point of his government is that no one community is favoured to the detriment of the others, and it is precisely for this reason that the Maronites are enraged against him, as they always have been the most influential and powerful community, and rely on French influence to obtain for them advantages possessed by no other sect in the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 46.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 591.) *Constantinople, November 25, 1886.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a telegram I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the Vali.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 46.

Consul Henderson to Sir W. White.

(Telegraphic.) *Aleppo, November 23, 1886.*

AN unsuccessful attempt on the life of the Vali has just been made. Three shots were fired at him by a Christian whom he has ruined.

No. 47.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir W. White.

(No. 299.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 14, 1886, 6·15 P.M.*

YOUR telegram No. 249 of 12th instant.

You may express satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at removal of Djemil Pasha from Aleppo.

No. 48.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir W. White.

(No. 392. Ext. 299.) *Foreign Office, December 14, 1886.*

Sir,

UPON the receipt of your telegram No. 249 of the 12th instant, I authorized your Excellency to-day, by telegraph, to inform the Porte that Her Majesty's Government have learnt with satisfaction that Djemil Pasha has been removed from his post as Vali of the Aleppo district.

I am, &c.
(Signed) IDDESLEIGH.

No. 49.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 622.) *Constantinople, December 7, 1886.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 591 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose the decypher of a telegram which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, containing the substance of a Report addressed by Saib Bey to the Sublime Porte, exposing the gross and systematic misconduct of Djemil Pasha, Vali of Aleppo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Consul Henderson to Sir W. White.

Aleppo, December 6, 1886.

(Telegraphic.)

SAIB BEY informed me to-day, confidentially, that he has fully reported Vali's misconduct, past and present, and warned the Porte of the danger if Sultan refuses any longer to dismiss him; that during the last three years his Reports have been a tissue of falsehoods, dictated by personal motives. He has deceived the Sultan, obtaining by his misrepresentation [?] powers, and criminally misusing them for his own gratification and aggrandizement. The Imperial Commissioner has demanded Vali's dismissal and punishment, and on Saturday telegraphed that he refused to remain any longer at Aleppo, where the laws of the Empire could no longer be administered, and where the Government had become a burlesque and was held in ridicule by the foreign Consuls. Grand Vizier telegraphed last night that in two days he would receive a satisfactory reply.

No. 50.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 629.)

Constantinople, December 13, 1886.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 591 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting the circumstances connected with the recent attempt on the life of the Vali.

It would appear that the shots were fired by one of the escort, and not by Ul Zeroon, the Christian who was at first accused of having made the attempt.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 50.

Consul Henderson to Sir W. White.

Aleppo, November 24, 1886.

Sir,

I HAD the honour to report to your Excellency, by telegram, that a Christian whom Djemil Pasha had ruined had unsuccessfully attempted his Excellency's life by firing three revolver shots at him.

Ul Zeroon is a very able lawyer, who came from Marash to Aleppo some years ago to practise before the Courts here. He was very successful, and became the legal adviser of the French Consulate.

He undertook some cases in which Djemil Pasha was interested, and succeeded in thwarting his Excellency. Since then he has been so persecuted by the Vali that he has partially lost his reason, and cannot be held responsible for his actions. He has been imprisoned several times, then exiled, then brought back to Aleppo, and again imprisoned. Some months ago he left for Constantinople to complain of the Vali's behaviour towards him, and returned about a fortnight ago, having been unable to obtain any redress for his grievances.

Yesterday the Vali was returning from the Seraï about 5 o'clock, when, he asserts, Zeroon fired three shots from a revolver at him. M. Goldenberg, the Dragoman of the Russian Consulate, happened to be near the spot, and heard the reports, but did not see who fired the shots. The Vali said to M. Goldenberg, "Zeroon has fired at me; did you not hear the shots?" I saw M. Goldenberg immediately afterwards, and he gave me the Vali's version of the affair, which I telegraphed to your Excellency. Zeroon, it appears, was quite close to the Vali, and had his intention been to kill him he could easily have done so, as the Vali was, as usual, walking in front of his military escort of eight soldiers with loaded muskets.

The news was immediately spread through the town, and the Vali's servants invited all to come to his house to congratulate him on his escape. A large crowd went to the house, and by this time a long telegram to the Sultan had been prepared by the Vali, expressing the confidence of the subscribers in his Excellency, begging His Majesty to retain him as Governor-General, setting forth in detail his Excellency's

version of the attempt on his life, and a great deal more which no one was allowed to read. The crowd, as they filed out of the audience-chamber, were asked to sign this telegram, which most of them did.

Zeroon, in his examination to-day, declared that he never discharged the revolver, and that his intention was merely to frighten the Vali and direct public attention to his Excellency's cruelties towards him.

It results from the official verification that the shots were not fired by Zeroon, but by the Vali's escort; and on examination it was found that none of the chambers of the revolver had been discharged! An Aide-de-camp who was walking alongside the Vali deposed that he did not see Zeroon fire; and another official, who was also with the Vali, declined to make any statement at all.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

P.S.—I have opened this despatch to say that M. Yakunanski, my Russian colleague, tells me that the Aide-de-camp who deposed that he did not see Zeroon fire has been put in prison by the Vali for perjury!

P. H.

No. 51.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 631. Confidential.)

Constantinople, December 13, 1886.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt by messenger, Captain Lumley, of your Lordship's despatch No. 379, dated the 2nd instant, with two copies of the printed correspondence.

I received yesterday, by post, from Mr. Consul Henderson, a despatch dated the 30th November, 1886 (copy inclosed), marked No. 31, giving further particulars with regard to the so-called attempt on Djemil Pasha's life.

The intolerable abuses, arbitrary acts, and vexations committed by that Vali in the Province of Aleppo have been a constant occasion of correspondence and of annoyance to Her Majesty's Embassy here for upwards of two years.

Your Lordship is well acquainted with these and with the high protection and favour enjoyed by that Pasha in the very highest quarters.

I need not trouble your Lordship with particulars, and it may be sufficient to state that ever since my return I seized every opportunity to draw the attention of the high dignitaries of the Porte to the discredit it would throw on their whole system of government if nothing came of the Commission of Inquiry conducted at Aleppo by Saïb Bey.

Owing to the high protection and influence enjoyed by Djemil Pasha's father, and to various intrigues at the Palace, the difficulties thrown in the way of Saïb Bey's mission appeared insurmountable, and at one moment it appeared that Djemil would find means to tide over this Special Commission, notwithstanding the infamies it disclosed.

Saïb Bey has shown a remarkable consistency and spirit of rectitude and justice during the difficult task with which he has been intrusted, and deserves the greatest credit for it.

The action of this Embassy had to be confined strictly within unofficial limits, and had to be conducted with reserve and delicacy.

I am happy to be able to confirm the information given by me by telegraph; the Reports of Saïb Bey to the Porte have fully corroborated Major Trotter's laborious investigations, and Djemil Pasha has been removed from Aleppo; he ought to have been considered unfit, and a disgrace to the public service. But such could hardly be expected to be the case, and he has been appointed Vali of the Hedjaz (to reside at Mecca), and has been ordered to proceed there at once, as I have been informed by the Grand Vizier, and as appears from the accompanying telegram.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 51.

Consul Henderson to Sir W. White.

Aleppo, November 30, 1886.

Sir,

ADVERTING to my despatch of the 24th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the leading Mussulman Notables, who had preferred charges against Djemil Pasha to Saïb Bey, have been thrown into prison by the Vali as Zeroon's accomplices, the functions of the judicial authorities have been suspended, and military officers and soldiers are now discharging the duties of the police, and in charge of the prisons. The Procureur-Général laid the position of affairs before the Minister of Justice by telegram, and received instructions to put an end forthwith to the intervention of the military authorities in the Judicial Administration, and remove it from their control. The Procureur-Général replied to Djerojet Pasha that he and his Department could not resist armed men, and declared the town to be in a state of siege.

Saïb Bey, with whom I am on cordial terms, has exposed the situation to His Majesty, and on the occasion of the so-called attempt on the Vali's life, acted with much tact and promptitude. Djemil Pasha, on the spur of the moment, sent the revolver to Saïb Bey by one of his Aides-de-camp, and to impart to him the news of the unsuccessful attempt on his life. Saïb Bey interrogated the Aide-de-camp, who admitted that he was walking alongside Djemil Pasha when Zeroon accosted him, but that he did not see Zeroon fire at the Pasha. He added that the Pasha's escort fired two shots at Zeroon, who merely flourished the revolver in the Vali's face, and upbraided him as the author of all his misfortunes and sufferings.

Saïb Bey, in the presence of the Procureur-Général, examined the revolver, and when all the chambers were found to be loaded it was sealed up by them, and at once sent to a Military Council, which Saïb Bey had meantime summoned without the Vali's knowledge. The prisoner Zeroon and the Vali's Aide-de-camp were brought before this court-martial, and their depositions taken down by the Juge d'Istruction, the Procureur-Général, and Saïb Bey's Secretary, in order that no mistakes should be made. When the truth had been clearly established, Saïb Bey went to tell the Vali the result of the inquiry, but he was not well received, as his Excellency had already dispatched numerous telegrams to Constantinople with his own sensational version of the affair, and had obtained some hundreds of signatures to a similar telegram addressed to the Sultan.

The Vali by this time had placed the town under martial law, and thrown all the most notable of his enemies into prison.

Saïb Bey and the Procureur-Général demanded their instant release, and, on the Vali's refusing, sent a telegram to the Sultan couched in very bold language, denouncing Djemil Pasha, and stating that they would leave Aleppo the same night rather than witness the cruel, vindictive, and lawless conduct of the Vali. And they were as good as their word.

They had scarcely left when the services of the Bishops were called into requisition by the Vali, who obliged them to sign a telegram to the Sultan confirming Djemil Pasha's version of the incident.

The consternation which prevailed after Saïb Bey's departure, and the effect produced by the imprisonment of the Mussulman Notables (one of the prisoners being the brother of the Sultan's Second Secretary, and father of one of His Majesty's Aides-de-camp), was such that no one dared refuse his signature, and the Patriarch, who only a few weeks ago refused to sign a Mazbata in the Vali's favour, was forced to lend his name to what he knew to be a falsehood.

As I have already reported, His Majesty requested Saïb Bey to return to Aleppo, and that a decision will be come to on Sunday. But Sunday passed without any telegram, and Monday also. On Tuesday afternoon Saïb Bey asked me to telegraph to your Excellency to say that he was well known to Sir Alfred Sandison, and begged your Excellency to allow Sir Alfred to ascertain why the Sultan had not telegraphed to him on Sunday as he promised, and why everything was held in suspense and no action whatever taken on his Reports.

I had some diffidence in accepting such a commission, but I did not wish to be ungracious or disoblige Saïb Bey, or give him any cause whatever to diminish the confidence he had shown in the Consulate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 51.

Consul Henderson to Sir W. White.

Aleppo, December 11, 1886.

(Telegraphic.)

SHAKIR PASHA assumed government of Aleppo to-night and liberated all the prisoners. Djemil goes to Jeddah.

No. 52.

The Earl of Iddesleigh to Sir W. White.

Foreign Office, December 21, 1886.

(No. 397.)

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 631, Confidential, of the 13th instant; and I have to state that your proceedings in connection with the case of Djemil Pasha, and the Commission of Inquiry into his conduct at Aleppo, are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) IDDESLEIGH.

No. 53.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(*Received December* 24.)

Constantinople, December 13, 1886.

(No. 630. Confidential.)

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 556 of the 9th November, I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of a despatch from Mr. Devey, in which he states that, since the return of Aarif Pasha as Governor of Bitlis, robbery, murder, and oppression by Kurds of Christians have increased to a serious extent.

He further states that a resident American missionary corroborates this statement, and says that during thirty years' residence in the country he has never seen so distressing a state of affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 53.

Acting Consul Devey to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, November 20, 1886.

(No. 31. Confidential.)

Sir,

I REGRET to have to report to your Excellency that for some time past very ill reports have been received here respecting the misgovernment of the Vilayet of Bitlis. Aarif Pasha, who was dismissed in 1884, was reinstated and returned to his post of Governor-General of Bitlis just a year ago. Since then robbery and murder, and oppression by Kurds of Christians, have increased to a serious extent. Mr. Barnum, an American missionary of Kharput, who lately returned from Van to that city, says that during thirty years' residence in the interior of Turkey he has never seen so distressing a state of affairs; Mr. Andrus, another missionary stationed at Mardin, writes that some of the things he heard and saw on his way from Sert to Mardin were too abominable to repeat. It is well known that Aarif Pasha made a large fortune by extortion and receiving bribes; the only point in which he has changed his conduct during his present Governorship is that he now takes bribes with a little more circumspection than formerly. For the condition of the vilayet during his last tenure of office, I need only refer your Excellency to Mr. Eyres' despatch No. 1 of the 30th July, 1883.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 54.

Sir W. White to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 647.)

Constantinople, December 20, 1886.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 631 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to forward a copy of a despatch addressed to me by Mr. Henderson, giving Saïb Bey's views of Djemil Pasha's conduct and proceedings communicated to him confidentially by Saïb Bey.

He also incloses a copy of a letter from the Vali containing an accusation to the effect that Zéron, the man who was accused of having fired at Djemil Pasha, had on the same day been seen leaving Mr. Henderson's house.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 54.

Consul Henderson to Sir W. White.

(No. 32. Confidential.)

Aleppo, December 7, 1886.

Sir,

SAÏB BEY informed me yesterday, very confidentially, that he had reported the misconduct of Djemil Pasha very fully to his Government. He had reviewed his past and described his present maladministration, and warned the Porte of the dangerous consequences if the Palace insisted on retaining him here in power. Saïb Bey also mentioned that the Vali's Reports for the past four years were nothing but a tissue of falsehoods written to serve his own purposes and to deceive the Sultan, from whom he had, by such misrepresentations, gradually obtained exceptional powers, which he criminally misused.

Saïb Bey has asked for the Vali's suspension and dismissal, and again on Saturday telegraphed to Constantinople that he would not remain any longer at Aleppo, where the Government had become a burlesque and was held in ridicule by the foreign Consuls, and where the laws of the Empire were a dead letter.

The Grand Vizier telegraphed on Sunday night that in two days he would receive a satisfactory reply.

Saïb Bey again sent to me this morning, asking me to telegraph to your Excellency for further information of what was being done at Constantinople, but I said I thought it would be better to wait for a day or two, as it was evident, from Kiamil Pasha's telegram, that the Porte was moving in the matter.

On Sunday I received a letter from the Vali, of which I inclose a translation.

The imputation that Zéron was at Her Majesty's Consulate on the morning of the so-called attempt on the life of Djemil Pasha, in company with Mr. Dermarcar and a Mr. Dallal, is so monstrous, that I beg to submit this matter to your Excellency for your instructions.

I have never seen Zéron in all my lifetime, nor has he ever put his foot within Her Majesty's Consulate, and Mr. Dermarcar has never seen or spoken to him since his return from Constantinople.

It can be proved, without a shadow of doubt, that Mr. Dermarcar, on the day in question, did not come to the Consulate till 4 o'clock in the afternoon; that he went to the Post Office in the Serai to await the arrival of the mail at 9 A.M., and remained in the Serai attending to Mrs. Barker's case, accompanied by M. Doüek, her advocate, till 4 P.M. or a quarter to 4.

The citation for Mr. Dermarcar summons him to appear on Friday, the 17th December, the day before your Excellency will receive this despatch.

I showed the letter and summons to the Imperial Commissioner, who said he was not surprised at anything Djemil Pasha said or did, as he knew him to be capable of far worse than this, and mentioned that the Vali had accused him to the Porte of having accepted a bribe of 5,000*l.* from the Bakour family, and the Procureur-Général of having loaded the pistol for Zéron!

Saïb Bey is much exasperated with the Porte for having allowed Djemil Pasha a free hand during the past fortnight in which to prepare false witnesses and documents under the menace of military patrols. It is true the truth cannot be concealed, and that his Excellency can only succeed for a very short time longer in such a barefaced deception, but it will take some time and trouble to unravel the web fiction fo which during the last fortnight he has so industriously woven.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 54.

Report by the Juge d'Instruction.

(Traduction.)

Le 20 *Novembre*, 1302 (6 *Rabih-el-Awal*, 1304).

IL a été démontré dans le Rapport donné par la Corporation de la Police en date du 16 Novembre, 1302, que le jour où le nommé Zéron (de la ville de Marâche) a eu l'audace de tirer sur son Excellence le Valy, ce même jour, à 4 heures et demie, cet individu sortait de la maison du Consulat d'Angleterre, sise au quartier de l'Azizié, accompagné de Mr. Gabriel Dallal et Mr. Nicogos Dermarcar, Drogman de ce Consulat, et se rendant en ville tous les trois ensemble.

Le même jour aussi Zéron se rencontra avec les susdits Dallal et Dermarcar, vers les 7 à 8 heures, au Café des Mrobsines (orfèvres), près de la grande mosquée, et après avoir assisté à une partie de "tawla" (tric-trac), jouée par Mr. Dallal avec un nommé Ségon Blaiche, et s'être assis un moment, a été connu son audace de commettre le crime, par des témoins qui ont fait reconnaître le nom et la figure (ou signes particuliers).

Il a fallu donc faire venir les deux susdits afin qu'ils donnent des informations; c'est pour cela que nous avons fait un mandat de sommation au nom du susdit Drogman, afin qu'il se présente devant le Juge d'Instruction le jour fixé, et nous avons adressé le présent Rapport au Substitut du Procureur-Général pour être transmis au Drogman par l'entremise du Bureau du Drogmanat du vilayet d'Alep.

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